

CLARENCE J. THORNTON:

ENTREPRENEUR

AGRICULTURE, BUSINESS, POLITICS

Interviewee: Clarence J. Thornton

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Description

Since World War I Clarence J. Thornton has been a participant and spectator in the life of northwestern Nevada. Born in 1898 in San Francisco, he eventually became involved in Nevada ranch work through his father's employment by the Pyramid Land and Livestock Company. His work on ranches near Gerlach, Nevada, and the Spanish ranch north of Elko gave him intimate knowledge of Nevada ranch enterprises by the early 1920s.

His graduation from the University of Nevada's school of agriculture in 1925 brought him an appointment as assistant county agricultural agent for Washoe County. In this capacity he worked closely with the Farm Bureau and 4-H Clubs in the county. His duties continued until 1947 when it became apparent that the state fair's future success depended upon its move from Fallon to a larger city such as Reno. In 1953, Thornton became manager of the Washoe County Agricultural and Industrial Fair in Reno, active there until his retirement in 1969. After 1953, the fair once again assumed the name of Nevada State Fair and has remained in Reno since.

Mr. Thornton also played a role with the first efforts by the federal government to provide relief programs during the early years of the Great Depression. These early tasks were handled through his agricultural extension office at the university. They were quickly replaced by more formal New Deal agencies, which he asserts were often under the direct political control of the Democratic Party.

During the Depression Thornton entered the poultry business in Reno through the purchase of the Western Hatchery and also participated in a poultry cooperative. In the 1930s, he was also an instructor in the agricultural college, an extension worker, and a relief administrator. Thornton was a leader in northern Nevada by the 1950s, and in 1963 he was asked to join a reform ticket to run for the Reno City Council along with Claude Hunter, Hugo Quilici, and John Chism.

In his oral history, Clarence Thornton offers important insights about Reno, Washoe County, and the state of Nevada between the wars and describes the phenomenal growth period after World War II. He explains the many decisions made in reference to state fair locations, the Reno Rodeo origins, and the construction of many public service buildings such as the Coliseum (now called the Reno-Sparks Convention Center), city hall, and the Pioneer Theater Auditorium in downtown Reno.

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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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University of Nevada Oral History Program
Mail Stop 0324
Reno, Nevada 89557
unohp@unr.edu
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Publication Staff:
Director: Mary Ellen Glass

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

Clarence Joyce Thornton is a California native, born in 1898. Working on ranches in northern Nevada to finance his education at the University of Nevada, he graduated in 1926. He continued his career in the field of agriculture as an agricultural extension agent, an instructor at the University's College of Agriculture, in charge of Depression relief (at one time part of the Extension Service's activities), the owner of a poultry hatchery, and worker in a poultry cooperative. He was also involved in various civic affairs and in politics. He served two terms on the Reno City Council.

Mr. Thornton's most interesting and longest-lasting activities, however, were in the organizing and holding of state and county fairs. Every fair-goer in western Nevada for more than twenty years was the beneficiary of Clarence Thornton's work, diligence, and expertise.

Dr. William Rowley's introduction to this oral history memoir expands and evaluates

some of Mr. Thornton's roles in Nevada agribusiness and agriculture's celebrations.

When invited to participate in the Oral History Program, Clarence Thornton accepted readily. He was a generous, involved, hospitable chronicler of his many activities in eleven taping sessions between January and March, 1982, all at his Reno home. Mr. Thornton's review of his memoir resulted in only a few minor deletions and clarifications, without significant changes in language. A generous donation of manuscripts and memorabilia supplements the oral history at the University of Nevada Reno Library.

The Oral History Program of the University of Nevada Reno Library preserves the past and the present for future research by tape recording the recollections of people who have been important to the development of Nevada and the West. Resulting transcripts and supporting materials are deposited in the Special Collections departments of the University Libraries at Reno and Las Vegas.

Clarence Thornton has generously donated the literary rights in his oral history to the University of Nevada and has designated the volume as open for research.

Mary Ellen Glass
University of Nevada Reno
1983

SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

Since World War I Clarence J. Thornton was a participant and spectator in the life of northwestern Nevada. Born in 1898 in San Francisco, he eventually became involved in Nevada ranch work through his father's employment by the Pyramid Land and Livestock Company. His work on ranches near Gerlach, Nevada and the Spanish ranch north of Elko gave him intimate knowledge of Nevada ranch enterprises by the early 1920s. His graduation from the university of Nevada's school of agriculture in 1925 brought him an appointment as assistant county agricultural agent for Washoe County. In this capacity he worked closely with the Farm Bureau and 4-H Clubs in the county. These connections made him a good choice to manage the Nevada State Fair in Fallon beginning in 1927. His duties continued until 1947 when it became apparent that the fair's future success depended upon its move to a larger city such as Reno. In 1953, Thornton became manager of the Washoe County Agricultural and Industrial Fair in Reno, active there until his retirement in 1969. After

1953, the fair once again assumed the name of Nevada State Fair and remained in Reno.

Mr. Thornton in addition to being prominent in fair and agricultural circles played a role with the first efforts by the federal government to provide relief programs during the early years of the Great Depression. These early tasks were handled through his agricultural extension office at the university. They were quickly replaced by more formal New Deal agencies, which he asserts were oftentimes under the direct political control of the Democratic party. During the Depression Thornton entered the poultry business in Reno through the purchase of the Western Hatchery and also participated in a poultry cooperative. At one time in the 1930s, Thornton's multifaceted abilities made him an instructor in the agricultural college, an extension worker, a relief administrator, owner of a poultry business, and director of a poultry cooperative. This was, needless to say, a busy life that made him a leader in northern Nevada by the 1950s. In 1963 he was asked to join a reform ticket to run for the Reno City

Council along with Claude Hunter, Hugo Quilici, and John Chism.

Clarence Thornton's observations on Reno and Washoe County and the state of Nevada between the wars and of the phenomenal growth period after World War II offer important insights about these years of growth and change. He was a businessman, a public employee, and community volunteer. Like any active and alert American in a far western state he was also attuned to the political events and opportunities presented to him. His remarks in this oral history serve to guide local historians through the many decisions made in reference to state fair locations, the Reno Rodeo origins, and the construction of many of the public service buildings such as the Coliseum, city hall, and the Pioneer Theater Auditorium in downtown Reno. The Oral History Program at the University of Nevada Reno can be proud to add this volume to its extensive collection.

William D. Rowley
Associate Professor of History
1983

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

I, Clarence J. Thornton, was born on March 12, 1898, in the city of San Francisco, California.

Michael Thornton, my grandfather, was born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1839, and died in Merced, California, in nineteen hundred and twenty-four. He came to the area about one year before the end of the Civil War, and was conscripted into the Army—no questions were asked, but he was not a citizen of the United States at that time.

My grandmother was Ellen Hamlon Thornton, born in Ireland, 1848, died in 1900, Merced, California.

My father, Michael Thornton, was born in Merced County, California, August, 1869, and he died in Reno, Nevada in 1932, at the age of sixty-three years. He was a livestock foreman for large cattle companies most of his life in Nevada. He came to Nevada from Merced in 1906.

My father married Miss Margaret Joyce, my mother, in 1897. She came from Ireland, and was born on the high seas. She died in San Francisco, California in 1900, when I was two

years old. I was an only child. Apparently, the Joyce family settled in Massachusetts before movin' to the West.

My grandfather and grandmother settled in Merced County, California. He was a grain farmer, and the family consisted of ten boys and three girls.

My grandfather's brother, John William Thornton, came on the same boat as Michael Thornton from Ireland, at the same time. He also settled in Merced County and was a grain farmer. He and his wife raised twelve children. William Thornton also died in Merced County, California.

He was also conscripted into the Northern Army, before he was a citizen of the United States. I can remember him tellin' about, he walked off the gang plank, off the ship, down here at the Bay Area, and right at the end of the ship they had this table and the conscription outfit, and you were in the Army, right there. He served about a year before the Civil War was over. They didn't know there was a civil war going on. But they were in the service. [Chuckling] I can mention, when

my wife tried to, years later, tried to get their military record for that time that they were in the service, that there's no records available. We could never find any, in the deal.

After my mother's death, I lived with my grandmother Joyce, at 1020 Oak Street, in San Francisco, California, and then moved to my father's sister's, on a ranch in Merced County, California. This ranch was about five miles southeast of Merced, near a settlement known as Geneva, now known as Planada, California. At that time, this section was all dry grain farming, dependent entirely upon rain. Years later, when they built a Merced Irrigation District and diverted water from the Merced river, and it became one of the most important parts of California fruit, especially Planada figs.

I went to the first grade in school in Geneva, and then to the third grade at a school near Merced Lake, for part of a year and then to grammar school in Richmond, California [laughs], and then to grammar school in Stockton, California. By this time, I was in the fifth grade, going to school in Merced, from which I graduated in 1915.

The great San Francisco earthquake of April, [1906] At that time I was going to grammar school in Geneva, or Planada. The morning of the earthquake at breakfast, my grandfather was complaining, when he milked the cow, she kicked over the milk bucket, and he gave the cow a good whack with the milk stool. My Aunt Kate, and Aunt Maggie were sleeping in the bed on the ranch at the same time, and Aunt Kate, the youngest one, accused Maggie, her older sister, of kicking her out of bed onto the floor.

Now the distance from Merced to San Francisco is about 100 miles, with no communication at that time. The trains did not run, for a week the sky was very cloudy, and it was a week before we knew what had

happened to San Francisco, causing the milk pail to tip over, and my aunt to fall out of bed. [Chuckling] She was really mad. [Laughs] Her sister kicking her out of bed.

I went from Merced, California, May, 1914, to Constantia, California, which is located about seven miles south of Doyle, California, on the Western Pacific Railroad. I worked in the hayfields from May till August, at two dollars per day, before returnin' to Merced, California. Also, the Mt. Lassen volcano, near Susanville, erupted that year, and there was considerable worry at the ranch, which was about forty miles from the volcano, that there'd be fire from the ashes out there. It's never erupted since, I don't think. Over the hayfields, it was hot ashes, all right, comin' down there.

Mary Ellen Glass: What do you remember about that?

Well, I remember we were very concerned about fires—you could see it, of course, but we were, oh, seventy miles away, maybe fifty instead of seventy. And all of the people in that country were concerned about fire from the ashes in those fields—in those hayfields—in the summertime. But nothing caught on fire in that area.

My father was ranch foreman of the ranch at Constantia, which was part of the Pyramid Land and Livestock Company. This company was put together by Pat [Patrick L.] Flanigan, of Reno, Nevada, and later taken over by the Reno National Bank. Pat Flanigan also built what is in Reno today as the Flanigan Warehouse, and the livestock yards down there, that were located on the northwest corner of Wells and Fourth Street.

The Pyramid Land and Livestock Company had the main office at Constantia, California. The company also owned the Winnemucca

ranch, the Milk ranch, Hardscrabble ranch, the Big Canyon ranch, the Cottonwood ranch, Paiute ranch, and the Fish Springs ranch.

The Fish Springs ranch, during the flu epidemic in World War I, was used by the company as a sanatorium or hospital. They had a large number of Basques working for them who got flu on the range, and they'd bring 'em into Fish Springs ranch. And they had registered nurses there, and the doctor came occasionally to check up; it was a hospital, I guess. It was quarantine for the rest of us there.

All of the ranches were close to Fort Sage mountain and Tule mountain. The company had about 30,000 head of sheep, 1,800 head of cattle. Part of the cattle wintered on a range where Herlong is now located, the ammunition depot. They owned or leased range land all the way from Weber Lake, California and Quincy, to the lava beds in Jungo, Nevada, which was on the Western Pacific Railroad between Gerlach and Winnemucca, Nevada.

Robert C. Turritin was general manager of the Pyramid Land and Livestock Company. He had been a banker in Reno, and also previously mayor of Reno, Nevada. My father, Michael, was superintendent of the ranches, and the company was broken up after World War I, about 1920, due to the poor price of sheep and cattle.

I returned to Constantia, in the spring of 1915, working on the Constantia ranch until November, 1915. In November of 1915, my friend, Robert Nance, of Merced, California and I left and went to the Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. I never returned to Merced.

In January, 1916, I went to work for an automobile mechanic [chuckle] in Stockton, California, at no salary. wanted to be an automobile mechanic at that time, I thought. In April, 1916, I gave up on the automobile

business and returned to work on the Constantia ranch.

In January, 1917, I entered Heald's Business College in Reno, Nevada, located on the southeast corner of East Second Street and Center Street at that time.

In May of 1917, I returned to Constantia and went to work in the main office in charge of the company's commissary under Frank "Bud" Bartlett, the head bookkeeper. I stayed on this work until I was voluntarily drafted. That's what they—they were nice to us, you know, they told us, "voluntarily drafted." They just drafted you. To a certain extent it was voluntary because at that particular time, they weren't equipped to take in a lot of soldiers, and even though some of us might have gone early, they wouldn't take us, till they got their building and military equipment ready. That would be in October, 1918.

The war was over on [November] 11, 1918, and we were honorably discharged just before Christmas. After about sixty days of service—this service was all in Lincoln Hall [chuckling] and the wooden barracks at the University of Nevada, which were located directly behind Lincoln Hall. It was divided into two sections—it was called the SATC—Student Army Training Corps—there was section A and section B. Section A was supposedly the ones with high school education and goin' to the University, and section B was the rest of us, that was just workin'. Do you remember those old barracks? They were back there—only tore 'em down a few years ago.

Because I was able to type, I was put to work typing Army discharges, including my own, which, under the question "Character," I gave myself an "excellent" character rating [laughs].

After leaving the Army, I returned to my job at the commissary at Constantia. In World War I, I and any person drafted into

the Army and discharged, when discharged, were promised their old jobs back. There was no question, you just went back to where you were.

A flu epidemic was on at that time. We had to wear face masks practically the whole sixty days we were in service. And where Nye Hall is now located, was a cemetery, and every night after midnight there was burials over there. We never knew who they were buryin' (we could see 'em). The room in the basement of the Frandsen building (which is the Frandsen building now), in the northwest corner in the basement, was a hospital. And as these men in the service got the flu or one thing or another, we took them over there to that hospital, what it was. Sometimes they came back and sometimes they didn't. It was all set up over there, down there. Afterwards, I made ice cream down in there (Frandsen Humanities), when in college.

In 1917, a group of people financed by the First National Bank of San Francisco, formed the company known as the Nevada-California Land and Livestock Company, and purchased the Smoke Creek operations from John Poco, Pete Poco, and Johnny Duke, for \$750,000. This increased the sheep operations when it was combined with the Pyramid Land and Livestock Company, to about 65,000 head of sheep. No cattle were involved in the Smoke Creek deal.

This purchase included the lower Smoke Creek ranch, and the Upper Smoke Creek ranch; as a headquarters, it was Shinn ranch, Painter's Flat, Clark's Valley, and rangeland as far north as Madeline, California. Robert C. Turritin, former banker and mayor of Reno, was the general manager of the two companies, and the main office of both companies were at Constantia, California.

In the summer of 1917 and 1918, I went along as a shepherd of sheep to market. The

first train of lambs we loaded near Quincy, California and Portola, and we sold when we unloaded at Salt Lake. The second train consisted of fifty double-deck cars, 290 lambs per car. This train loaded near Quincy, Spring Garden, Portola, and Wendell, California. It went on to Kirkland, Illinois, about sixty miles west of Chicago, Illinois.

I stayed in Kirkland till the sheep were all sold, in the Chicago stockyards. Then I went into Chicago and stayed at the Kaiserhof Hotel. The name of this hotel was changed either durin' World War I, or right after the War was ended. The boarding house in Kirkland is the only place I've ever been served my dessert first with the meal. Pie, and cake, you know, was first. I never had it again—your pie, your cake, your pudding—was first. It was kind of a livestockman's boarding house, you know.

* * * * *

Well, maybe that's a good place to go back and talk a little bit more about your early life. You didn't tell me anything about your schools. What teachers you liked, and how you made friends with the other kids—.

Oh, gosh, I don't know. You see, bein' a loner, only child, livin' with an aunt, I just, I guess you might say, I just kinda wandered through school, [chuckles] through grammar school, in the deal.

One time I was afraid I wasn't goin' to graduate—I got the measles [laughs] my senior year. Today measles are not that serious, but at that time, you lost a lot of school. But the schools I went to, like in Planada, I don't remember who the teachers were there, or Geneva (whichever you want to call it).

Then I went from there to that Lake school, Merced Lake, and I don't remember

who the teachers were there, at all. And then I went from there to Richmond, and Richmond at that time, was just becomin' a city. It was founded by the Standard Oil. I had an aunt there, and they were just startin' to put the place together and sell lots. In fact, my father bought a lot down there in Richmond when they were sellin' them, and you paid down five dollars a month on it, the lot. After he'd had it a year or two and made his payments, went down there and located the lot, it was out in the ocean. [Chuckling] Well, they were buildin' a town, that was what they—.

From there I went to Merced, and I don't have any good feelings or any bad feelings or anything about those teachers there, I just got through school in the deal. If I ever had any good feelin' about any teacher, it was Miss Zimmerman who taught English. And when you took English from Miss Zimmerman, you learned English [chuckling], pure English. You was really learnin' English.

You mentioned the San Francisco earthquake—you were just eight years old then. Do you have any other vivid memories about it, besides this fight between your aunts?

Well, of course, I remember the area, in Planada area, which was about 100 miles away. And there was no trains runnin', there was no news at that time, the sky was completely cloudy for a week before we ever heard that there'd been an earthquake in San Francisco, California.

What about the other young people around there?

Oh, I was out on a ranch, that was it. With my two aunts. One of 'em got kicked out of bed, my grandfather was milkin' the cow. Now this actually happened. It happened over 100

miles away, it tipped over a milk bucket. That was quite a shake, I'll tell you.

You see, you didn't have—there was no conversation, nothin'. You didn't know what happened. Just quiet, no trains, no more—clouds and all— 'course the clouds were smoke, but we didn't know that.

What an isolated place to be.

Yeah, on this ranch, you didn't have any radio or any TV, or any telephone, and you didn't get any mail because there was no trains. That's just the way it was.

Well, I was very interested in the Flanigan livestock operation too. Pat Flanigan was really one of our leading livestock people.

Yeah, he was, yes, that's right.

I'd be interested in having you tell me what he was like.

I never knew him.

What did your father say about him?

Aw, nothing. [Laughs] I'd actually never heard much about Pat Flanigan, as well as I knew his son Paul, and his brother—I was tryin' to think of his brother's name the other day, I think it was John. He lived up till just a few years ago. And then they had a sister which you're probably aware of, Helen Flanigan.

But he was quite a key to the city of Reno, Pat Flanigan was, at one time. He was in business, and in politics—. See, that Pyramid Land and Livestock Company was quite a good company, but Pat, I guess, was a little reckless in his expansion, or whatever you call it, or whatever happened to him.

Your father was so busy in these livestock operations —what sort of a man was he?

He was about the size of Bill, my son, about six foot. I'm the short one [chuckles; well, my grandfather was short too. He was about five-foot-two, a little Irishman.

On the other side, my father of course, was a livestock man, rode horses and all that. Along 1917, Bob Turrutin had him come into town and bought him a Model T pickup, Ford pickup, just before Christmas. And of course, he didn't know how to drive a car, but—we knew nothing about it. But about two weeks after Christmas, Turrutin went to San Francisco on his vacation—Christmas vacation—and he came in to the bookkeeper and he says, "Where's Mike?"

And the bookkeeper said, "Well, I don't know. He went to town with you before Christmas, we haven't seen him since."

So he bought him this truck. And he started out of Reno, and it was snowin', and he went out by Pyramid Lake, out by the Winnemucca ranch, and got stuck—the bearings burned out in the car. And he was also, besides the ranch foreman, a blacksmith. So they took the engine apart and overhauled it. And they got goin'. Then they went around to Big Canyon ranch, which is up there where Joe Capurro is now. There was a lot of ice and snow on the ground, and as he was goin' down to the shed to put the car in—you had three pedals on those Fords you know; one was a brake, reverse, and the gear. He was goin' down there, and he made a mistake and put his foot on the low instead of the brake, and he hit a post and knocked the radiator off the car. It was red hot, you know, just exploded like a locomotive. So they put that together. He had a cowboy with him by the name of Edward Hardy.

Then they went on from there, and they got out in Herlong area, and there was quite a few settlers out there, and they got stuck in a mudhole, out there. So he went over to one of the homesteaders to get a team to pull him out. The guy came over with a team, and they put a chain on the Ford, and they pulled it out—it was gettin' dark. So my dad thought he'd help the situation out by turnin' the lights on in the Ford, and the team ran away with the Ford. With him in it. [Chuckle]

He was twenty-one days from Reno to Constantia—it took him three weeks on that trip. [Laughs] Turrutin just about had a fit. You know, three weeks—nobody sees my dad. They had no idea where he was.

The old days of get out and get under. Well, he was really a resourceful person then, wasn't he?

Well, he had been a blacksmith too. He was a mechanic too, you know.

Three weeks! What does it take now, an hour and a half?

To go to Constantia? About an hour. Well, he went around, you see-why, in the wintertime, there was deep snow around by Pyramid Lake, I don't know if you know where Big Canyon is or not, do you? It's in the north end of—northeast end of Tule mountain if you know where Tule mountain is, that's the big mountain out by Pyramid. It's over there. And the company owned those ranches along in there, but he was twenty-one days [chuckling] out at the—. Now, anything else I can tell you?

Well, I just wondered about what sort of person he was.

Well, without any discredit to him, he—which is no discredit, it was a kind of a credit—his normal procedure in getting up in the mornin' and goin' to work—'course at that time, those livestock men all wore the long, heavy, underwear. Get up, put his feet on the floor, reach over and get a bottle of whiskey and take a big swallow of whiskey, and then reach over and get his pipe, put tobacco in it, light his pipe, and then dress. Then go in for breakfast. That was a morning routine. Yeah, that was livestock people.

Well, it was habits, some, you know. He originally, at one time in his livestock career, decided to go into business for himself, at a place that you call Midas now, but it was Gold Circle then. It was when Gold Circle first was discovered, which is out of Golconda. So he quit the livestock business and went up there and opened a bar, at Midas. I wasn't in this country at that time, but it didn't last too long. The people that knew him said he was too generous. [Chuckle] He gave his business away out there.

Tell me about this automobile mechanic that you were going to learn about cars from. That was a really pioneering effort.

Oh, yeah, that's quite the—. His name was Patton, Charlie Patton, and he had a shop in Stockton. At that time, you had these automobile road races that ran from Los Angeles to San Francisco over the Tehachapis and all that, and he was one of the people that would enter into those races, and I had met him in Merced.

And of course, at that time automobiles were the thing like aviation is now, or something else, but I decided I wanted to learn to drive a car, how to fix a car, and I went and talked to him, and I worked there about four

months, just whatever they gave me to do. He never paid me anything—he didn't have that big a business. That was in Stockton, and then I went back to Constantia after that. That took care of the automobile. I found it interesting to see what made 'em run, in the deal.

EARLY CAREER AND COLLEGE DAYS

The Nevada-California Land and Livestock Company, Smoke Creek, which it was commonly known as, went out of business at about the same time as the Pyramid Land and Livestock, and for the same reasons—poor livestock prices.

After gettin' out of the Army in World War I, I worked at the Pyramid Land and Livestock commissary until the spring of 1919. During the fall of 1918, a young man by the name of Everett W. Sweezy, came to Constantia to live. His father was the junior vice president of the First National Bank of New York, which was a bank that did practically nothing but large, international loans. It was owned, I guess, practically all by a man by the name of George Baker in there at that time. Everett and I became very good friends in that spring of 1919.

A veteran of World War I came to Constantia, his name was Paul Eaton. Paul Eaton was from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and had been a student at the University of Michigan, before going into the military service. He became a member in aviation of the Yale Escalon, one of the first aviation

divisions to go to France, along with President [Theodore] Teddy Roosevelt's youngest son, Quentin Roosevelt.

Quentin was a little more reckless than the rest of 'em, according to Paul, and they had been out one day on their regular flight, and when they came back, the commander discharged the unit, but Quentin went Out on his own, and he was shot down by the Germans and killed. And even at that, the Germans, while they were at war with us, they thought so much of Teddy Roosevelt, that they gave his son a military funeral, behind the lines.

Paul Eaton also was shot down, but not killed. He was shot on landing with a pistol. The bullet lodged in his back, and the Germans were short of anesthetic, so they just left the bullet in his back till it festered. He had a picture of himself sittin' on the table, with the doctors removin' the bullet. He was held a prisoner of World War I for about a year—showed us that picture sittin' there— they were out of anesthetic, it was just—.

For example, one day we drove ten hours, and got from Columbus, Nebraska, to Kearny, Nebraska, a distance of fifty miles. The roads were a solid mass of mud.

From Omaha, I came home on a train. Paul Eaton went on a train—I have never seen Paul Eaton since that time. We did exchange one letter about ten years ago. Everett Sweezy shipped the Buick by train to New York. (I'll have more about Sweezy later, because I went to work for him later.)

I returned to Constantia and worked in the hayfields until the fall of 1919, when I entered the College of Agriculture at the University of Nevada.

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I had never been to high school, so I had to enter at the age of twenty-one, as a special student, which required havin' three character letters of recommendation from prominent people. The University of Nevada had about 250 students then, and some of them were just gettin' started after World [War] I, or had come back from the War to finish their education. So my age fit into this group very well.

Special students could only attend for a two-year period, and with no degree, and then you had to drop out, but could come back in one year, if their attendance had been satisfactory, which I did.

I would have to give credit to a person by the name of George "Molly" Malone, who I met while we both worked at Constantia for the Pyramid Land and Livestock. He was a surveyor, and responsible for me even goin' to college. He was in college at that time, and in later years, became one of our United States Senators from Nevada. (Later on in years, when he ran for the United States Senate the first time against Key Pittman, he didn't

win the election. The second time he ran, I handled his campaign—I was his campaign manager in northern Nevada—and he lost that election to Pat [Patrick A.] McCarran. The third time he ran, [chuckling] due to the Carville-McCarran situation, he got elected.)

Oh, that guy could fight—he would have been a champion boxer. One day, gettin' back to—a man named Jack Dempsey, who was barnstorming at that time and hadn't become as popular, had signed up to put on an exhibition fight down here on Evans Avenue and Commercial Row. And whoever was gonna fight, backed out, and the promoters were goin' up to the University to find somebody to fight Dempsey, this man Dempsey. And they ran into Malone, and he was on his way down to fight Dempsey. On the way down, he ran into the football coach, and told the football coach where he was again, and he said, "No, you're not goin' down there— you'll lose all your eligibility." He was a football player, and a baseball player, too. So he never did—he told me years later, that he and Dempsey used to always talk about what'd've happened, if they'd had that fight. He had a funny theory on fightin'—not funny—. He said, "If you're gonna go down, go down where you are. Don't go down backin' up. You just stand there," he said, "take it or go ahead, but don't go back." [Chuckle] Yeah, he was quite a fighter.

I liked Malone very much, and I think he was a very good senator. He had one terrific weakness, and his wife also inherited—that was money. [Chuckle] He never believed that money was a necessity he just thought it was something to use for a purpose. He never believed in acquiring any. We didn't win the second election, but we won the third one. [Chuckling]

Well, I think if I'm gonna talk about the college career, I just as well start talking on

how I got to college. [Chuckle] Not having any high school education, and working on ranches at a dollar a day, it was a little difficult to accumulate enough money to get to college. However, as a sideline, I was invited to take part in a poker and crap game. [Chuckling] And this added into my salary for the first year, in this gambling situation (which was ranch gambling—wasn't legalized gambling at all)—generally done with a candle on the top of a tomato can with a wooden table with a blanket over the top of it, and primarily consisted of poker games, in which I was very fortunate in the first year and wound up with about twelve hundred dollars.

The man who helped me out, told me when I started, he says, "You'll probably win for the first year." He had been a professional gambler in Reno. Gambling was closed at that time. And he says, "You go out and your luck will probably change," and that's about the way it turned out.

I saved that twelve hundred dollars with my thirty dollars a month, and went to the University. I had no difficulty with the agriculture classes [at the] University outside the first six weeks. Being a special student, I was allowed to pick the courses I wanted to take, and I registered for fifteen hours.

The first report on my grades for the first six weeks, I was delinquent in twelve of the fifteen hours to start with, having never had to study for four or five years. And that's the last delinquency I ever had in my college career. It was the first six weeks. The agriculture situation, as I say, I had worked on ranches, and was acquainted with the ranching situation. The technical part of it I had to learn from scratch.

I majored primarily in animal husbandry, and Professor [Frederick] Wilson was the animal husbandry professor at that time. Charles Knight was the dean of the College

of Agriculture my first two years that I went to the University, and Verner E. Scott was in charge of the dairy. The actual dairy classes we took for laboratory were conducted where the present College of Agriculture is now located. That was their agricultural farm, right down at the bottom of Evans Avenue.

The first semester, I lived in the Butler Apartments on North Center Street, which are still there at this time; and then the second semester, I started out livin in Lincoln Hall. I believe, at that time, you paid about forty-five dollars a month for board and room. As I recall it, twenty-seven dollars and fifty cents a month was for the dining room, and the rest was for the room in the hall over there. Then I joined a fraternity during that semester, and moved in there, and the board and room there was forty-five dollars a month. At that time, it included your member ship.

I had no particular problems with the College of Agriculture, after—as stated above—my first six weeks. At the end of two years, which was the expiration of a "special student," in which I classified, I left the College of Agriculture and went to the Spanish ranch in northern Elko County to work.

You really did want your education a lot, didn't you?

Well, I did, yes. It was tough, too. The roughest things I got into in the education was the courses I picked, not knowin' what I would get into. I signed myself up in trigonometry, because I needed a three-hour course at a certain time and that was just right. And you ask your fraternity brothers about this course, "Oh, yeah, that's a dandy course—" Three hours, and it was just the right time. So I found myself takin' trigonometry with no background. [Laughing] I managed to get through it all right.

Some of the courses were a little outside of the College of Agriculture, in the deal. Wound up with chemistry, for instance. You found yourself takin' the same chemistry that the doctors took for three years, [whether] you were gonna be a fireman or you were gonna be a doctor.

The professors at the University of Nevada were all fine; if you wanted to get through school, they would help you day and night, and it was up to you. If you found out you really wanted to get an education, and you had a problem, you could go talk to 'em. And I never had one of 'em ever turn me down, or act like he was disgusted with me for askin' him questions, or—. I did get tangled up with Dr. Hartman in physics, Dr. Frandsen in zoology. They were complicated courses, and they spent a lot of time helpin' me get [chuckling] through college.

Well, those two particularly helped just an awful lot to get through college.

Oh yes. I don't recall that they ever, you know, showed like maybe they want to go home to eat or [laughing]—. Gosh, you have to ask a lot of questions, when you have no background.

I managed to do pretty well in all my courses that time, until I signed up in a course in Spanish. And I anticipated no problem, of course, in Spanish, because I had a rough background in the Basque language, and had more or less made my living with it for a couple years at Constantia, signing up the Basques who came from the Pyrenees, both French or Spanish, and also register them for the draft in World War I. However, when I took my course in Spanish, I got a failing grade in the finals. [Chuckle] And I went up and talked to the professor—incidentally, the professor who was teaching Spanish at that time was mainly—his

main interest in life was bees; he had beehives all over the valley. And I talked to him about my background in the thing, and he said, "Well, the problem is that you can talk the Basque language as a language—you don't talk the real (what did he call it?) , the Castillian Spanish." So he gave me another examination, and he and I came to an understanding [chuckling], and he gave me a passing grade in it.

In my first time at the University, I think it's worthwhile mentioning that the athletic department at that time, as far as I can recall, consisted of one man, and his name was Courtwright, and he was the football coach. He coached football, and he coached basketball, and he was the physical trainer also. And one of the athletes that I had happened to help along at that time was a man named Bradshaw. He was one of the famous—. Well, he was new here at that time, but he was one of my patients that I took care of, his rubdown and stuff like that, in the deal.

When I came back to school the second time, of course, they had a more complicated athletic department. The previous coach, Courtwright, had left here by that time, and the new coach under which the athletic department football was run, was Charlie Erb, who had been a quarterback of the famous California "wonder team" of the twenties, in there. He never used to refer to himself as a "wonder quarterback," he always used to just tell me, "All I did was call the signals and get out of the way." [Chuckle]

One of the good acquaintances I made durin' his career there, and I followed through life after, was a man named [Harold] "Brick" Muller. Brick Muller was a famous football player at the University of California, and he was also an end on that "wonder" football team in the 1920s and eventually a famous doctor down in California. He and I became

quite well acquainted over the years—he's dead now but—my roommate and he were quite pals, a fellow named Bill Martin. Of course, Bill was goin' to the University of Nevada and lives in San Jose, California now.

I got interested in the athletic department and all stages of it. By that time, [John E.] "Doc" Martie was here coachin' basketball, J. E. Martie. He had previously been coach at Elko of the basketball team. And he came here, I believe, as basketball coach and head of the physical education department, and also became quite successful as a basketball coach.

And the first time that I was here in school, the University of Nevada football team was the first team to go to the Hawaiian Islands from the States to play football. And my roommate was Bill Martin. He was quite a popular player on the team, and he had the job of doin' the janitor work at the chemistry building at the University. And he turned that job over to me while he was gone on this football tour over at the Islands, and playin' there. And when he came back, I just kept on doin' that work, and I became the part-time janitor at the chemistry building at that time, and what is now the Mackay School of Mines.

I kept an interest up in the athletics, and eventually became athletic manager, which paid me about the same salary as the janitor work—around twenty-five to thirty dollars a month.

The man who was ahead of me on the athletic department at that time was a man named Barney Keaten, and he was runnin' the athletic department and takin' engineering, and he was an honor student, too. He got too much of a burden, and I wound up as the graduate athletic manager, which was run and financed at that time, by the student body. The University paid a salary of twenty-five dollars a month, and you got to make all the football trips.

The third year I was here, Charlie Erb was no longer the coach. The new coach was a man named "Buck" Shaw. Lawrence T. "Buck" Shaw of Notre Dame came in here. And I started out my career under him as athletic manager till I graduated.

I didn't actually go to school over five years—I was there seven—but the first two as a special student. Two years out, then two years back, as a special student, where I didn't graduate because I was short—not in hours to graduate. I had more than 148 hours, but I was short one of these courses that was required. And that year, I paid my registration fees in school, but never went to class. The class was under Dr. Frandsen, and he never required me to attend class in the deal.

In the summer of 1925, when I was in school, I took a contract at Emerald Bay. The California highway department were building a retaining wall at Emerald Bay, and they had a Greek crew of stonemasons. The highway department had to arrange for the sleeping space for the men, and their eating; and on my contract was to feed 'em. The stone wall that those Greeks built, Greek crews, in 1925, is still there today. It is located just above Emerald Bay campgrounds at Eagle Falls.

Well, at the time I did that, the camp was at Eagle Falls. And Eagle Falls is near Emerald Bay, and you come up from that Mrs. Knight's property down there—you come up that trail. If you walk up that canyon, you come out at Eagle Falls parking lot, right there. There used to be a drinking fountain there on the highway, and that's where the camp was.

So I fed this construction crew that summer and all durin' the summer, I was buyin' a lot of groceries in Reno, and a lot of my groceries were bought through the Nevada Packing Company—especially meat—and the bill got pretty big. And one day the secretary

of the Nevada Pack got to lookin' at this bill for this meat at Eagle Falls, to me, and found out I was a college student. So he got [chuckle] real excited, and came up to see how he was gonna get his money. Actually, the way we got our groceries at that time, they came by boat; came from Reno to Truckee on the train, and then from Truckee to Tahoe City, and then from Tahoe City, they came to the resort of Emerald Bay by boat; we picked our groceries and supplies up there.

But what concerned him was this college student runnin' a big boarding house like this on credit, and nobody knew this person, so he came up to see who was up there. And it happened, at the same time he arrived, a meat man from Minden who was interested in business, came up to see what business he could get. And they both arrived at my camp at the same time. So when the man from Nevada Pack inquired about his bill, the other man was over there waitin' to sell me meat. As a result, I had no trouble with my credit [laughs]. In fact, they couldn't lose anyhow, because I couldn't get any of my money that I contracted till it had been advertised by the California state highway department for thirty days after the contract was over. [Laughing]

One of the reasons I wanted to talk about it, because this is 1982, and Emerald Bay road is practically closed every winter since that time. The California state highway department had a contract to build a retaining wall at what was known at that time as Eagle Falls—it was a public campgrounds. And the contract went to a Greek contractor, stonemasons. My only part in the operation was to supply the food for them under a contract with the state highway department—state of California. And at this time, that retaining wall that was built in 1925, is still there, and the road is still closed

in the wintertime. [Chuckle] That, of course, is what revolved around the continual battle the people of Emerald Bay and the State of California puttin' a bridge across Emerald Bay, which the public, I guess, has had their way, and they've stopped the construction of that bridge goin' across the bay there—Emerald Bay—so you still go around the head of it.

Just previous to openin' that boarding house at Emerald Bay, I worked for a short time for the Hobart Lumber Company, and that job consisted of measurin' wood that was cut by Italian contractors. The Hobart Lumber Company had a contract with the Reno Press Brick Company, and the main contractor in there was a man by the name of Maffi (he has two sons here in Reno at this time—Ben Maffi and Joe Maffi). In fact, Joe Maffi is, at the present time, one of the directors of the First Federal Savings and Loan here.

This was in the bootleggin' days, and most of the animals they used were mules, and most of the Italians were drinking wine. In fact, the cook slept with a butcher knife under his pillow, and most of the contractors had guns and they worked as partners and when you went out to measure the wood, lots of times you wound up in a shooting match, between the two Italians who were actually cuttin' the wood—they were cuttin' around the contracts, so much a cord, it was my job to measure the wood. I only stayed there about ten days; [laughing] I was just out of place.

Then I came back, after two years, after I'd stayed out two years and worked on the Spanish ranch. You gotta make some money.

I registered again as a special student, which was the procedure when I had left school. But in the meantime, the regents had made a rule that if you had been in the service and could pass your courses, you could graduate. If you weren't able to pass

the course, of course, you had to go back and take the preliminary in it. I had registered as a special student. Well, I ran into President [Walter E.] Clark, who I knew very well, and talked about why I was back there and he—. I had just finished registerin'—I went in as a special student. And he said, "Well, you can graduate." And he told me how it was done, and I went back in and changed my whole procedure, and I *did* graduate. It took me a little longer than most students.

The fifth year that I was there, it was a mistake on the part of myself and maybe the dean of the College of Agriculture, because there was a special course that the legislature had passed—it was required, you had to take [it]. And I went to Dean Stewart along there, the year before that, and talked to him about that course. And he told me—in fact he wrote a letter—he told me that I graduated under the catalog on which I entered school, and that course wasn't in there.

But when it came down to graduation, the faculty didn't uphold it. So I had to go. I never went to school the fifth year, as a class. The course I had to take was under Professor Frandsen, and I'd taken so many courses under him—zoology, botany, and everything else—I went and talked to him and he said, "Well, go ahead and register, and come up in December and I'll give you the examination, and again in May, and you won't have to come to class."

So I never actually went to class a fifth year, in the deal. I'd had all these courses and things under him, so I got out of that. While I was there five years, I just—. In that fifth year, I was the agricultural extension agent in Washoe County.

Before your graduation, you said that you joined a fraternity, and I was wondering if you wouldn't like to talk a little bit about

the fraternity, and some of your fraternity activities.

Oh, I was the house manager at one time—it was SAEs. And it was not a novelty to me or anything at all because I had lived on these ranches and lived in bunkhouses, and livin' in a fraternity house was just about the same. I was kinda a natural in there. The fraternity life probably was one of the things that gave me a lot of confidence in myself. You come off a ranch, and you work in these places, and you're not so sure of your social background and so forth and so on, and you soon find you're just as equal as the rest of 'em in there. And at one time I was house manager of the SAEs. At that time, the house was on Virginia Street.

Durin' the time I was in the SAEs, I was fortunate enough to meet a man by the name of [William C.] Billy Levere. He was an official of the national SAE fraternity, but recognized by all fraternities as a real fraternity man who protected all their interests. They still have a large memorial in remembrance in Evanston, Illinois today, to his memory.

Another person I met while I was in the fraternity was a man named Key Pittman. Key Pittman was an SAE from Tennessee, I believe, and he was United States Senator from Nevada at that time. Not bein' an athlete, I didn't have too much to do with athletics in the fraternity—I was active in the house itself and the operation, and as I said previously, manager of the operation of the house for one year. (I think that's about all I want to say about it.)

What did Senator Pittman do, just drop by, or did he have anything to do with the University at that time?

No, Senator Key Pittman came by every four years when it was election year [chuckling] and went to the football games,

and visited the SAE house. He was quite a powerful senator.

Yeah, he was in better shape in those years than he was later, wasn't he?

Well, I knew him very well later on, because durin' the years when I was mixed up in the construction of Boca Darn, which involved this large lawsuit that's still bein' contested, the Orr Ditch decree, I would talk to Key Pittman— senator—he was a United States Senator—off the record simply because, when the United States federal government built the Lahontan Darn in Fallon, and put it into operation, they didn't have enough water to cover the area that they were interested in. So they filed suit in Nevada against the Truckee Meadows here, to get additional water from Lake Tahoe.

And my point in talking with Senator Pittman was that, the fact that when they filed suit against Nevada properties, the government, they also filed suit against California, to take water out of the Little Truckee, in the State of California; they advised the federal government to get out, that they had no authority or power over water in the state of California. And they did.

When I would talk to Senator Pittman two or three times, and without quotin' him, but almost direct, he always contended that the constitution under which Nevada joined the Union, never mentioned the word "water" and if you don't mention anything, why, you retain possession. The federal government had no jurisdiction over the water here. It didn't seem to make much difference; the lawsuit went on. And this lawsuit started in what, 1913, and it's still bein' contested—well, partially contested today on the thing, on the deal. But of course, he wasn't practicin' law then, he was a senator, in the deal.

You were talking about the SAEs, and I was going to ask you about some of the other social organizations on campus. You spent a lot of time working hard for the athletics, and you worked for—as house manager for the SAEs—what did you do for fun? Did you have a girlfriend?

Sure. Not very often—two or three of 'em, at different times [laughing]. Went to dances on the weekends. You ask me what we did for fun. To cite the year of '23-'24, when myself and another SAE were carryin' twenty hours of studyin', and a lot of it was lab work, we went to school from breakfast till midnight five days a week. And Saturday morning, we started in catchin' up on our schoolwork (talk about Hartman and those people), doin' your lab work, and writin' it up. We'd get done about six o'clock on Saturday night, get caught up. Then we'd eat and [chuckling] go downtown—you wanted to know what we'd do—. And the dance halls were downtown, where you saw the girls and the boys. And we would be stone sober and in good shape, and we eventually found some girl and get something to eat, [laughing] and took some girl home for somebody that didn't get home. And that went on, I would guess, from August that year till the following May, and we didn't average five hours a night sleep, at that time. We just didn't have time—you just didn't look up. That was a—[laughing]. I'll tell you, some of the girls we took home, some of 'em are still around here [laughs] with their boyfriends. I think that's about the extent of my activity in the fraternity—I took part in everything that they did.

You were in the Block N, too.

Well, the politics, that was a situation where I not bein' an athlete but bein' athletic manager; the members of the Block N got

in a big hassle amongst themselves, of who should be president of the Block N Society. And they couldn't agree, and I wasn't even at the meeting, when they advised me that I had been elected president. I served one semester as president of the Block N Society [chuckle]. And, in a way, even among the factions who couldn't agree, they could agree on runnin' it as long as they had me in there to settle their difficulty about probably somebody wantin' to be president that they didn't want; I never knew. They just walked up one day and said, "Would ya like to be president of Block N?"

And then I found myself as a member of Coffin and Keys, which at that time, I thought, was a very good organization and very sound. Doc Martie and Professor Claude Jones were both advisors of Coffin and Keys at that time. Even at that time, there was a certain controversy about Coffin and Keys, by those members who were out, who never got in.

And you know, it's a funny thing, in the year of 1926, if you're lookin at the '25-'26 *Artemisia*, when I wasn't even at school—I was registered—they appointed me on a lot of committees I never did serve on. I never knew it till a few years ago, I got to lookin' through there, you know, and I found I was on this committee and that committee [laughing]. They wanted to fill out their membership or something, I guess.

I served as secretary of the agriculture—Aggie Club—for several years, and it was quite an interestin' deal. We were always broke [laughing] and never had any money, but they had membership in the situation there. I guess that's about it.

Maybe you could tell me a little bit about Reno in the 1920s. Just what was it like as the small town it was then? This is the period that Walter Clark wrote about as "The City of Trembling Leaves."

Talking about Walter [E.] Clark, the president of the University, for some reason or other, he used to like to talk to me. And he talked to me about his son who was Walter [Van Tilburg] Clark, who was in school at that time, and he hadn't graduated from high school. And Walter Clark always apparently believed that his children should go out and work a year before they went on to college, after they got through with their high school. And that is what Walter Clark, Jr. did. He worked I think as a blacksmith in that time.

But President Clark, you see, hadn't been here too long when I came to school in 1919. They brought him here from—what's that big university in New York—City College or something? Yeah, that's where he came from.

Walter Clark, I would say this generally, on the city of Reno, which I've always believed: and it didn't pertain to the twenties, but years later, after I'd been here for several years, one morning I was eating in the Grand Cafe, and the man sitting next to me was a man named Jacobs, and he was a very successful businessman. He also had a brother here, who was not quite so successful. And I asked this man (which you realize, of course, he was Jewish), I said, "Why is Reno such a good town?"

And I've never forgotten what he told me. He said, "The reason that Reno's a good town is because the inventory is money here."

And I said, "Well, what is the difference between you and your brother?"

And he said, "The difference between me and my brother is he raised a family, and I didn't."

But I never—that's so true—it's still true practically. The inventory is still money, in the deal. And that came to light so much when they had the Depression—the banks were closed—the inventory was still money in the deal. But the town itself, now of course,

I always liked Reno, or I wouldn't've stayed here. I didn't have to stay here; and it was a town of about twenty to twenty-five thousand people. Your downtown area was stores, clothing stores, hardware stores, different types of stores, restaurants, eating places, dance halls, that type of thing there. The politics was practically all run by a famous man—Roberts, Ed [Edwin E.1 Roberts—he was a big man as the mayor of the city of Reno.

One of the big things we used to do, was to go to Tony Pecetti's dance, on Saturday night on the outdoor dance hail, on the northwest corner of Center and Fourth Street, where the Ford garage is today. I knew him very well. But that—you know, I stayed here because I liked it. See, there was Prohibition in effect then, and you weren't supposed to get any drinks, but you could see the policeman—he knew where to send you. And gambling was out—there was no gambling at that time. Oh, there was selective gambling—optional gambling, poker primarily, in some of the places.

Dr. Church, who afterwards became famous in his snow survey fields of the United States and other countries, I knew very well personally, and he talked one time about his original introduction to Reno. He got off the train back in the eighties, and came here to teach, and was walking down Commercial Row, where's there's a lot of bars along in there, and they threw a dead man out in the street, right in front of him. And he said he come pretty near gettin' back to the depot and gettin' back on the train and leavin', after that. That was his introduction to Reno.

Reno has always had kind of a reputation as a tough place, and that was one of the reasons I asked you the question of Reno in the twenties.

Before the twenties, downtown in Reno when I was pretty young—and like the year

when I was in business college here, and other times in town—and my dad was runnin' the ranches at Constantia, when he needed help—laborers—he would call me and send me down Commercial Row. And I would go in these bars and places and find these men, and I'd kick 'em on the heels and wake 'em up, and sober 'em up, and take 'em over the next morning, and load 'em on the NC and O Railroad, down there. Pay a fee of five dollars and send 'em out to the ranch. That's the way he hired his help. But I wasn't old enough to be in those bars, I never had any trouble at all, that time.

At that time I was livin' with the Ninnises, up on Stevenson Street—board and room there, goin' to business college. Shorty Ninnis just died a while back—I don't know whether you ever knew him or not. Vivian Ninnis, he always resented that "Vivian."

I just thought whatever you would like to say about Reno, and living here as a college kid, and—.

Well, the problem with me, is I wouldn't have anything bad about it. To me, it was another town.

Walter Clark's novel is so dreamy and wonderful; it isn't bad. It says Reno was a really good place.

I never saw Walter Van Tilburg Clark in my life downtown. [Laughs] I saw him in Virginia City, [laughing] but I never saw—I don't mean he wasn't downtown. But there was nothin'—it was just a town you grow up in. You went to dances, went to prize fights, went to rodeos, went to the shows, took in the fairs, went hunting, went fishing, played golf, went to athletic games, football, basketball, track meets—I just—I wouldn't know anything to say about it— whether it be good or bad. To me, it was a good town.

RANCH LIFE IN NORTHERN NEVADA AND EASTERN CALIFORNIA

At Constantia, during the years that I was there, mainly between 1915 and 1921, practically all of the people who worked on the ranches were single men. Occasionally, you would have a woman cook working, and if they did, why, her husband either helped with the cookin' or worked on the ranch in addition.

The usual salary of everybody—practically everybody— was a dollar a day, a sum total of thirty dollars a month. It included board and room, which was also credited at a dollar a day. The working hours were usually from sunup to sundown, six days a week. Very little regards were made to holidays it was just another working day. In the summertime, the people who worked in the hayfields generally got two dollars a day, but they only got paid for the days they *actually* worked during that time. Now, where do you want to go from there?

What did you do for fun?

Recreation, if there [chuckling] ever was any, would generally consist of going hunting,

or horseback riding. Occasionally, you would take a break and go to town—take a week off, and that was generally your recreation. A lot of the men had local interests in mining; on their weekdays, or days off, they would go out in the hills and work on their mine. But recreation, as such, apparently was not much of an item [chuckle], because of the hours you worked from sunup to sundown, six days a week. By the time Sunday come, you were ready to sit down. [Chuckle] Do your laundry, and take care of your personal things on Sunday. That about took care of your recreation.

UNION LAND AND CATTLE COMPANY

In my relationship with the Union Land and Cattle Company, I'll first start with the Humphrey family, so the people in the future won't get confused. Herb Humphrey and Bill Moffat (W. H. Moffat) were always known as the owners and operators of the Union Land and Cattle Company. And when I first came to Reno in 1914, one of the first men I

ever met was Bill Moffat. Father at that time was ranch foreman at Constantia, which had nothing to do with the Union Land and Cattle Company at that time, but it did later.

There was a James Humphrey, who owned and operated what was known as the McKissick Land and Cattle Company, with headquarters at Milford, California. And their operations was primarily in the Honey Lake Valley, and Secret Valley, which was on the road to Alturas, and their rangeland in that same general area.

His brothers, two of his brothers, Frank Humphrey, and Jake Humphrey, had a separate operation known as the United Land and Cattle Company. Their offices were in the Clay-Peters building in Reno, but their operations were primarily in the Hawthorne-Mina-Tonopah area. They ran cattle. In the late twenties, they discontinued that operation with their cattle down there, and operated out of the Clay-Peters building in Reno.

They also, Jake Humphrey and Frank Humphrey, were the owners of the Humphrey Supply, which was a meat-supply company located on Elm Street, the corner of Elm and Sierra Street in Reno.

And there was another brother, John Humphrey, of which I know very little about, except I've been told at one time, he owned what is known in this area as the Mayberry ranch. They were all cattle people, and I've been told they all came from Sierra Valley [California], and that area up there.

The Union Land and Cattle Company was a very large operation. In fact, the newspapers one time wrote a story in which they claimed the Union Land and Cattle Company owned or controlled one-fifth of the state of Nevada. And most of that would have been north of the Southern Pacific railroad tracks.

They had three divisions that I'm acquainted with. The Spanish ranch division, which was located in Tuscarora/Independence Valley area included the Spanish ranch and ran as far west to north of Winnemucca, to the Godchaux ranch. In between was the Winters ranch, and the I-L ranch that they operated. And then of course in Independence Valley, they had the Powers Meadow, the River ranch, the Brewery, and the Young Brothers ranch.

The superintendent of operations there at my time was a man named George Calligan, who was a native of Reno, and had been for years a cattle buyer.

East of the Spanish ranch was what was called the Deeth division. The superintendent of that division was [James] Russell, whose son, in later years (Charlie Russell) became governor of the state of Nevada, in the late forties and early fifties.

And they also had a third division called Antelope Valley division, which was on U.S. Highway 395 south, and included the post offices of Topaz and Coleville. It was Antelope Valley, a very beautiful valley—they owned over half of the valley.

When they got into financial problems, the acreage in that valley was offered for sale in the thirties for a dollar and twenty-five cents an acre by the real estate concern out of Los Angeles, and it didn't sell. That was in the early thirties out there. Now look at it.

The superintendent of that division was a man by the name of Cunningham—I don't recall his first name. After the company closed down, he became owner of what is known as Topaz Lodge in that area.

The Union Land and Cattle Company—the first president, I think, was W. H. Moffat, and he was an experienced cattle man. And as the years went on, they replaced him with Herb Humphrey as president. Humphrey was also experienced, but he was different

type. Moffat was a conservative operator and Humphrey was a promoter, and in the process of all these holdings, about the time of World War I he decided to go into the wool business.

And they formed a company, Union Wool Company of Boston, Massachusetts, and were financed by banks in Boston. The head man that they transferred back there to run it was Fred Kleppe, who was not too old a person; he was one of the natives of Reno here—the Kleppe family.

Herb Humphrey decided to corner the wool market of the world, and this was just before or—durin' World War I. And they bought wool, and kept raisin' the price, and price, they got it very high. And they had a large volume of wool either bought or under control. Well, the manufacturin' people in the East decided that maybe wool was too heavy—that people should wear cotton for a while. And at that particular time, Herb Humphrey was on a trip to Europe on a boat, and they had no communications. And they called the loans with—. The Union Land and Cattle Company apparently was their main security—it was not part of the Union Wool of Boston, but it was security on the notes.

And Mr. Calligan told me that one day the phone rang; it was a man from Boston, the Old Colony Trust Company of Boston, and told Mr. Calligan what his name was, and he was in Elko—he'd like to come out to the ranch. So Calligan sent a car in to pick him up. When he came out to the ranch, he served papers on Mr. Calligan, that they had taken over the Union Land and Cattle Company. Especially that's—each division, at that time, he said there was four or five men came from Boston. Each one got off at different places, went to the ranch, and took over the ranch as additional security.

Lots of people think the Union Land and Cattle Company itself was in trouble

financially, but I doubt if they ever were. It was just additional security. Previous to that time, the Pyramid Land and [Live]stock Company was not part of the Union Land and Cattle Company, but for some reason, it had become part of the security, and the same situation occurred—a man showed up and took over the Pyramid Land and Stock Company, of which Mr. Turritin was the general manager.

The federal courts appointed a receiver, and the receiver was a man by the name of W. T. Smith of Elko, Nevada. And he ran the Union Land and Cattle Company for some four to six years, till it was disposed of in there. Durin' the time it was in receivership, I asked Mr. Moffat, who I knew well, one day, if he would ever buy back the Spanish ranch division (and he was back operatin' it privately at that time), simply because when the other owners of the Union Land and Cattle Company declared receivership, he wouldn't declare bankruptcy. He left his name liable to pay off the debts of the Union Land and Cattle Company, which he did, one day, in the amount of about approximately \$700,000, some four or five years later. But in conversation with him it was still in receivership. I asked him if the Union Land and Cattle Company Spanish ranch division was ever sold, how much he thought it would sell for, and he said, "Oh, between two dollars and two dollars and a half an acre.

And I asked him if he was gonna be a bidder, and he said, "No." He had other operations.

In 1925, when of course, they had a sale and sold the Spanish ranch division to the Ellison Ranching Company, and John G. Taylor, it was sold for two dollars and twenty-five cents an acre. And incidentally, Mr. Taylor of course, is dead, but the Ellison Ranching Company, who were the purchasers of the ranch itself in 1925, still own and operate it

at this time [1982]. I think that should give enough detail of the Union Land and Cattle Company, and where it was.

It was a good outfit. Mr. Moffat himself, of course, after he paid off his creditors, which he could've done anyhow because he didn't declare bankruptcy (he wanted to keep his name clear), went into business in the same area in different ranches up there, and of course, became one of the biggest cattle operators west of the Mississippi river. Swift and Armour and those people did very little business in the western United States without knowing what Moffat was doin' in the cattle business at that time. He was that big. And he operated, as far as I ever knew, alone, with two sisters there.

His final operation from about 1925 on was under the name of H. Moffat Company. H. Moffat was his sister, Henrietta Moffat. He was so big that they operated without a bank account as you and I have, they operated with drafts. And the drafts were written on the H. Moffat Company and the Wells Fargo bank of San Francisco, which meant that you had to keep sufficient money in the bank to honor the drafts as they came in.

And in one particular case which I'm aware of, durin' that period, he bought a ranch that the government had for sale in Lakeview, Oregon for a million dollars. I asked his bookkeeper how he handled the draft and he said he called before he bought the ranch, and said he'd be a bidder on this ranch, and it'd probably be around a million dollars, he was makin' a draft—one of his drafts on it— and he probably wouldn't be in for two or three months to San Francisco. And he said the draft came through for something over a million dollars, the bank honored it, and two or three months later he came in and gave 'em a note. It was that type of operation.

His Sisters, they tell me, were such heavy owners in the bank, that durin' that time, when they got dividends or something from the bank, they just bought more bank stock [Chuckle]

Most people in this area—some of the older people in this area—will remember the old Sparks mansion on South Virginia Road. And that big house was built by Governor Sparks, when he was governor of the state of Nevada. And then followin' his ownership, far as I know, it became the home and operation of Mr. Moffat till his death—approximately just before his death he sold it out there. You don't see those kind of people any more. That big residence out there, you know, the house? It's gone now.

Somebody's putting it back together out in Pleasant Valley.

Oh, I don't know whether they are or not [chuckle], I think it broke 'em.

Mr. Moffat himself, where he operated in Nevada—it sounds a little absurd to say—he could practically operate without money. He had bought hay and cattle and pastures from the third generation of a family, and very few of 'em ever asked for the money at the time the deal was completed. He bought practically all the cattle and hay and pasture, "market price, date of delivery," and they could go up and get their draft, or wait till they needed the money.

In the Elko country, where he was such a heavy operator, the banks were never very reluctant to tell the cattleman, "Yes, this other man offered you the higher price, but you'd better sell to Mr. Moffat. His drafts are good in the deal." That's the way they operated. Now, that's it.

Look at that Miller and Lux deal. I tell you, that was Something! I don't want to

say anything about it, but—. One thing I say about Miller and Lux, was that Miller's name was never Miller. Did you realize that? The Miller that got the passport in Germany and come to the United States— when he got the passport, he didn't have the money. This man whose name was what, I don't know, changed his name to Miller, picked up the passport, and came here. And became Henry Miller.

Oh, well, lookit. He promoted that San Francisco exposition of 1915. He died before they had it, but his holdings in California were so extensive—and Nevada and Oregon—and then, as years went on, of course, the holdings were all turned into oil fields and oil wells. And I believe his estate probably's still in court today, as far as I know. Portions of it, very small portions of it. His big holdings of Nevada, of course, were out in Yerington and Winnemucca country, and up into Oregon from there. I didn't know *him*; I knew Moffat [chuckle].

The reason I talk about Moffat is because he's the one that got me to college. Yeah, five, six, seven years later after come through all this, he came [and] hunted me up [chuckling].

He was a very fine-looking man. I'd say he was about six-foot-four or five—just as straight as a stick—he stood just as straight. Always dressed very nicely in there, and never wore an overcoat [chuckle] in the deal. Now, where do we go from there?

THE SPANISH RANCH

Can I ask you about the Spanish ranch and your work there?

Well, the Spanish ranch was part of one of the divisions of the Union Land and Cattle Company, which had divisions at Topaz, Deeth, and Tuscarora. According to the newspapers back in there, at that time, they

owned or controlled one-fifth of the northern part of the state of Nevada because they ranged the cattle and all that, that they had.

When I went there in 1921, it was in receivership: the Union Land and Cattle Company was bankrupt. The receiver was W. T. Smith, of Elko, Nevada. And the ranch itself, they always said, consisted of 100,000 acres—just the ranch, with no range at all in there—they worked as high as 500 men durin' the summertime; and hayin'—you didn't buy one mowin' machine, you bought fifty. Yeah, I bought fifty mowin' machines at one time, and twenty-five hay rakes, at one time.

They started hayin' generally in the first of July, and they hayed till the snowfall in October, November. This was all with horses at that time, there was no tractors at all in there.

Most of the help there on the ranches were Basques—not all of them. When I went there on May the first of 1921, when they counted the cattle all over the field, they had 21,000 head of cattle in the field. *Twenty-one thousand head!*—in the fields [chuckles] at that time.

I went there as a bookkeeper, actually, and before I left, I did everything. I was a buckaroo, and I became kind of a personal aide to the superintendent, who was a man named George Calligan. Six-foot-seven, 350 pounds. [Chuckle] And he had been with Moffat for years. And Bill Moffat personally told me one day, he was the best cattle buyer he ever had. He was a terrific cattle buyer. He was also— (without puttin' him—) he drank a little along the way. And Moffat would give him a big salary; at the end of the year, he'd always be overdrawn. When he was overdrawn, why they'd give him a Christmas present, and start him on January the first, all over again.

I went with him one time over to Jordan Valley, Idaho, and he bought practically all

the cattle in Jordan Valley, and delivered them to Godchaux ranch, which is about twenty miles north of Winnemucca. And the next spring, they sold off the cows and calves and other stock, and we took out of there 625 head of two-year-old steers, and didn't cost Moffat a cent—not a penny. Trailed them across that Owyhee Desert out there, the Little Humboldt. That was a pretty fair profit [chuckling] if you know anything about cattle. Two-year-old steers, 625, and Moffat didn't have a penny out. He got all his money out—. They bought cows and calves at that time for fifteen dollars a head, in there. Weaner calves and cows.

The Spanish ranch, you know, was run with the I-L ranch—it didn't run alone—and the Winters ranch and the Brewery ranch, which was by Tuscarora, and the Godchaux ranch, which was north of Winnemucca—that was the division, the ranch divisions in there, of those ranches.

That's another Basque name, isn't it?

[Laughs] Frankly, all the ranch-hand help, when I went there in 1921, were Basques on the ranch. They were doin' the ranch work and out on the cattle range. It was so big, that they ran three divisions of cowboys—fifteen cowboys in a division—at that time. One bunch would work the range, one bunch would work the fields when they brought them in, and the third bunch would trail 'em to Elko to ship. Forty-five cowboys there. Horseback [chuckles].

Well, Altube was apparently the previous owner, I guess, and who was the other person—? I know there was two of them on that gate, Altube, and—.

I mentioned the Garat ranch, but that's up the other way.

Well, no, the Garat ranch was a—it was the Twenty-Five. But the Garats you see, were Basques. I knew them very well and they had that Twenty-Five—Y-P is what it's called—Y-P; it adjoined—some of the range overlapped in there. So there was four of those Garat boys, four brothers, and they ran that ranch down there—it was a big operation. As far as I know, I guess they're all dead. I think the last one was George Garat. And there was George, and Charlie, and Henry—what the heck was the other ones name? Johnnie. They were very fine neighbors.

But Calligan would never buy their cattle. He bought 'em one time, and he found out—see, he always bought, Calligan bought the cattle by guess, no scales—guess the weight. And he found out that they had a scales down the road, [chuckling] and had weighed the cattle before he bought 'em. So he never bought 'em again. [Laughs]

I often see young Chan Griswold. I think about him because Calligan bought the cattle from Chan Griswold, who was his grandfather (of the Griswold-Henderson Land and Livestock), along the river there in Elko, from old Chan Griswold, who was quite a character—. And after he bought em, why, Griswold got a better offer and sold them to somebody else. Calligan never said a word. He went back the next year, and they went out and looked at them, all those, and bought 'em, and he gave him a check right there, [laughs] for the cattle. This is *big* money, gee whiz—.

See, Moffat was the largest individual livestock operator west of the Mississippi river. Swift or Armour and those people never did a thing in the cattle business without knowing what Moffat was doing. And he was it. He was like Fitzgerald and

the Nevada Club. He was it—there was no partner, and well—he had a partner, H. Moffat, who was his sister, Henrietta.

You know, he came back after the Union Land and Cattle Company went broke, and the rest of 'em pleaded bankruptcy when it went broke, and Moffat wouldn't plead bankruptcy—he didn't want to—he wanted to keep his name clear. He stayed clear, and in 1924, I guess, you'll find some—but if you ever looked it up in the newspapers—he went to Carson City and paid his creditors off \$675,000 in full one day. They came out with headlines in the paper like that. He just didn't wanna plead bankruptcy. That \$675,000 was a lot of money at that time. And he went on, you know, went back to Elko and became—well, *very* wealthy. Very, extremely wealthy. He was a good operator.

All these Basques on the ranch and so forth, as bookkeeper, you probably paid them and that kind of thing. What were they doing in those days? Nowadays, you know, the Basques are so interested in their old-country culture and their language and their contests and so forth—.

They just worked, they earned a dollar a day, and some of the good ones got forty-five dollars a month. They did ranch work—hayin', irrigation, fence-building, stackin' hay, whatever there was to do, just the regular ranch work. Very few of 'em ever went into the cattle business. 'Course, they did go into sheep business, but the cattle business seemed to be out of their category, but they did ranch work on the deal. And then all this Basque thing that's come up in the last few years—.

You see, I had to learn the Basque language, I skipped that earlier, didn't I? I had to learn enough of it to talk to 'em. They had the Basques because the company's—Pyramid Land and Livestock Company—

the other livestock company— would get these immigrant Basques from Spain or France over there, and they generally came through—a man down here in Reno that had the Commercial Hotel, about where Harrah's is now—John Etchebarren, or the owner of the Toscano, Joe Elcano.

When they came to this country, they would come direct from the Pyrenees, and to Constantia, then they'd send them out to the ranch. Well, somebody had to be able to talk to 'em—find out how old they were, what province they came from, what their name was, what clothes they needed—. So the company assigned a Spaniard to teach me because the Basque language itself is just a lingo; it's not a language. And he taught me that so I could receive them and find out who they were and where they came from, and so forth.

Then, during World War I, the government decided that all these sheepherders should be registered for the draft, and they sent me out in the hills to find 'em, and register them—how old they were, and all that you know, and their names, and register 'em for the draft. Well, it happened, at just at that time, there was a Basque commander in charge of the armies in Europe, so they were very enthusiastic about the War itself. I always remember two brothers I knew very well, Joe Mocho, and Raymond Mocho, his brother. Well, when I went to register them for the draft, and I wrote their name Mocho, they gave me the card back, and they said, "That's not our name."

I said, "What is your name?"

He wrote his name out, and his name was *Hourcourigary*. That was his name, I never forgot that. [Chuckles] Mocho wasn't his name [laughing]. But you see, the names they gave you, usually represented a province or the city or the area where they came from.

You know, Bilbao, Navarra, and Viscaya—it's in those towns or something, and they're right in there. I was really shocked 'cause I knew 'em well—played poker with 'em and everything [laughs] else, but that wasn't his name.

Pete Poco, you know, was the one that built that big house on the southeast corner of Arlington and California. Remember that nice brick house that was there years ago? Where the bank is now? There was a nice brick house there, right across the street from the apartments. And he built that with the money that he got off of this Nevada-California Land and Livestock Company, up there, that he sold, and then, you know, later on, I think he committed suicide. And his wife was a Padere, if you ever knew any Paderes. If you ever went to [Dr.] Louis [E.] Lombardi, you knew the Paderes. His nurse was a Padere. In fact, she's still here. She ran Louis' place, kind of, [chuckling] for years.

Might be a little interestin' too—on the sale, the Nevada-California Land and Livestock, when they sold it for \$750,00, John Poco and Pete Poco took their \$250,000 each. Johnny Duke, the third partner, decided to stay in the company rather than take the money as a partner, and he lost all his money 'cause the company went broke. Up in Madeline.

They worked two crews of people there as a rule. The Basques generally had their own setup, their own bunkhouse, but they ate in a regular dining room. And the Basques' work consisted primarily of just straight ranch work—irrigatin', hayin', and so forth.

I went there as a bookkeeper and made \$125 a month with board and room. And Mr. Calligan and I got into a little discussion after I'd been there about a month, and I quit. And so he raised my salary to \$150 a month [chuckle] and I stayed with him and we became pretty good friends. And

he hired another bookkeeper, and then I'd travel with him when he bought cattle and bought hay and bought pastures and that type of thing.

It was quite an unusual situation; we got along very well after I quit. He was a man that—oh, he had two or three peculiarities. If he lost anything, you stopped *everything* and went lookin' for it, *there*. He smoked cigarettes quite heavily; he'd have four or five plastic cigarette holders. If he lost one of 'em, you stopped everything and went lookin' for that *one*, even though there was a store where there was a whole supply. And he always reasoned while you were tryin' to find that thing, you'd find something else—[chuckling].

And he also had spells where he liked to fire people on the ranch. He would go down in the fields and the ranches and fire everybody he saw. Just had one of those days. And in his urgency one day, he fired the dairyman. The dairyman —there weren't many dairyman on a cattle ranch. And the dairyman packed up and left—went to Elko. And it came five o'clock that evening, or four o'clock, and there was nobody to milk the cows. And Mr. Calligan, with his large stomach, was trying to milk those cows off a milk stool. [Chuckling] At seven or eight o'clock at night, he got in his car, and drove to Elko, found the dairyman, and hired him again, [laughing] and brought him back, and the dairyman went out and milked the cows that night. I know—. This all happened. [Laughing]

He had a butcher—on this ranch they killed all their own beef. They had a butcher, an old German by the name of Jim Scherberg, and he—. While Mr. Calligan was a wonderful buyer of cattle and could guess live weights, the butcher continually was agitatin' Mr. Calligan to guess *dressed* weights with his beef when they killed it. And he had won so

many hats from Mr. Calligan [laughing], that Calligan wouldn't even bet with him any more on dressed cattle weights at all.

The ranch itself, worked in the summertime, between two and three hundred men, and in the hayin' time, which generally started about the Fourth of July, and we kept hayin' until it snowed in the fall—along about October, as a rule, before they quit hayin'. And he had crews—he had a lot of the men who worked there were Indians from the Duck Lake Indian reservation at Owyhee. And he had Indian crews that worked together—all Indians—and he had Basque crews that worked together—all Basques—and then he had just the white men he picked up. And he used them in competition with one another, to get work out of 'em [chuckling]; he was pretty clever along that line.

I stayed there, that first time in 1921, from May till December, and I worked there as part of that time as a bookkeeper, and part of the time I was with him, traveling, buyin' cattle and workin' on the ranch work. Then I left there and went to Cuyama Valley, which lays west of Taft, California, and went to work for Cuyama Valley Land and Cattle Company, which was located twenty-five or thirty miles west of Taft. And it was a cattle company that was owned by two brothers—Cebrian brothers, they were Spanish—as a bookkeeper.

The following spring, I came back to Nevada (I was there about four months), and went back to Elko, and had trouble finding a job there, and I had no money—I was broke [chuckling]. And I went to work for Calligan again, at the Spanish ranch, for a dollar a day, as a cowboy.

After I'd been there about a month or two as a cowboy, one day, he and Harvey Sewell of Sewell grocery company, came and talked to me about buyin' a big freight truck that the

Sewells had. The Spanish ranch itself, hauled its own supplies from Elko to the Spanish ranch, and they generally started haulin' in May, and hauled till the snow, continually. Just food, and equipment, and gasoline, and all the things that they would need for the winter, because when winter came in November, December, you were practically isolated out there, till spring came again.

And the Sewell brothers grocery store had a truck for sale. And I bought the truck, with an agreement with Mr. Calligan that I would get a freight contract with the Spanish ranch, which I did. And that contract consisted of fifteen dollars a ton, for all the merchandise I hauled from Elko to the Spanish ranch.

And also, at that time, these truck men, like myself, hired the help for the ranch out there, so we picked up the other men in Elko, that they wanted for hayin' and so forth, and they would pay us five dollars a man to deliver them at the ranch. *If* they registered to work, And the reason I say that, over at the office where they registered for work, was a sign that said—notified all of them that there would be a two-dollar deduction for poll tax from their salaries, for the time they worked there. Poll tax was in effect that time. And lots and lots of men would walk in, and all ready to go to work, and read that sign, and not take the job. They would go out to some other place and go to work for some other rancher that didn't have an office and didn't take the two dollars out.

If the man quit—if we hauled him back to Elko—he had to pay us individually. Anybody they fired, we would haul back to Elko and the company paid for that. I ran that truck for about three months, then I sold it to a man by the name of Kirk Cornwell, who had an additional truck.

Then I became manager of Sewell's grocery store, at the Spanish ranch, at a salary

of \$200 a month. And the grocery Store, I ran that till about November. And because I wanted to come back to the University the next year, I thought I'd better get out of these better-payin' jobs, so I quit the grocery store, and went back on the ranch, workin' for the Spanish ranch at a dollar a day. Then in December, the store caught on fire and burned to the ground completely.

Incidentally, the store was a building that [the] Sewells had in Tuscarora, the town of Tuscarora, for years. And when they decided to move to the Spanish ranch, I had the contract of haulin' it down there on my truck. They cut it up in sections—it was a galvanized building. Before I was manager, it was run by a man by the name of Robert F. Caudill—Doby Doc—he was the first manager of the store at that time.

I stayed with the Spanish ranch till April, as a cowboy that year, 1923, and then I left there and we came down through the Owyhee Desert—Humboldt House country, on a truck. I eventually wound up at Gerlach Land and Livestock, at Gerlach, Nevada.

Then I went to work for the Gerlach Land and Livestock as a cowboy, till hayin' started. Then when the hayin' season came on, I went to work in the hayfields. And from there, I came back to the University in the fall of 1923. Now I think that takes care of that part.

Returnin' again to Gerlach Land and Livestock, which was located about 100 miles north and east of Reno, and owned and operated as far as I know, by Mr. Fred Gerlach of Stockton, California, who started buyin' the area—different sections— along about the turn of the century, 1900. And I think his first purchase was a ranch called the Deep Hole ranch out there. And then he acquired other ranches—Granite ranch, and Clear Creek.

The town of Gerlach, of course, was named after him. He had his ranches there

before the railroad was there, in that area. And he acquired all this property without ever seem' it, and he decided to come up one time to see it (and this is a true story as far as I know), and got out there in the summer of 1905 or '06 or about then, and they had a tick fever scare out in this country at that time. (You probably read this, but this is supposed to be a true story.) And he got bitten by a tick out there, and there's no railroads, or no way to get to Reno, except that time it was stages. And they rushed him to Reno to the doctor, with this tick bite, and it turned out to be just a regular sheep tick, not a fever tick.

He kept this Gerlach Land and Livestock until his death in the twenties, and he never returned to the ranch in that time. He would come to the Overland Hotel in Reno, and he had a very fine manager by the name of Jim Razor, who ran it just like he owned it all those years. After his death, the Gerlach Land and Livestock was broken up and sold to a man by the name of Ed Waltz.

Jim Razor himself, was a very fine livestock man, and a miner. He was the man that developed the present gypsum site, out there at Empire, Nevada. He didn't develop, he discovered it. On his time off, he would go mining. And must have sold that to Portland Cement, out there, and then they developed it startin' in 1923, when they started to build the Empire cement plant.

The Gerlach Land and Livestock Company itself was probably one of the best-financed and the best-managed cattle outfits in western Nevada. This was entirely cattle, no sheep, and it was very well run—had their own purebred herds of cattle, purebred horses.

Mr. Gerlach never returned to the ranch. He had a son-in-law by the name of Nichols, who was married to Mr. Gerlach's daughter, who was there for years as a bookkeeper and

commisary man. And also, Mr. Gerlach's son, Fred Gerlach, Jr. lived out in that area and homesteaded what is known as the Fly ranch. He lived there for years and stayed there after his father died for a while. But the man himself, Mr. Gerlach, Senior, never came back. He owned real estate in Stockton, California.

My uncle, Tom Thornton, went to work for Mr. Gerlach—he came from Stockton, California in 1902 and worked at Gerlach for years. And he used to come to town once a year to help drive the cattle in and ship 'em. That was the time they come to town. No railroads, no stages, just dirt roads.

A very isolated area, and it still is. That's where I want 'em to build the county jail. I reasoned, you know, that if anybody breaks out of jail, they'd never walk anywhere out there.

The [Spanish] ranch itself was supposed to consist of 100,000 acres, and in the summertime, we worked about 200 or 300 men there. The fields were so big, that when some of the fields—when the men would go out to mow in the fields the first time in the morning, on a new field, they'd take a lunch with 'em. You know, mowin' the fields at that time was all done with horses, and mowin' machines. No gasoline equipment of any kind at all. And the men would take a lunch, because they wouldn't get back [until] evening, to make the first cut around the field.

You know, the Spanish ranch was also joined by Powers Meadows, to the south; and the River ranch, which was called the River ranch because it was situated on the Owyhee River. Incidentally, the Owyhee River originates in Independence Valley, in which the Spanish ranch was located. it's supposed to be the only river in the state of Nevada that flows to the Pacific Ocean, indirectly, by flowing into the Snake River, and the Snake

River flowing into the Columbia River and the Columbia River ends up with the Pacific Ocean.

And also, an additional ranch was called the Brewery ranch. In my time, there was no brewery there, but I suppose there had been a brewery there at one time. And the Young brothers ranch. These ranches were all located in Independence Valley. They were considered as part of the Spanish ranch.

I believe I said before, that when I went there in May of 1921, that spring they turned 21,000 head of cattle out of the fields. When the cattle were in such weak physical condition that you didn't drive them out of the fields, when spring came, you merely opened the gate and let them drift themselves out of the fields—they were very thin. It would take them maybe two or three weeks to get away from the ranch. They'd eventually work out of the field, day by day, a little farther out there on the spring grass.

And they worked as high as forty-five cowboys there at one time—three crews—they had a crew that worked the fields, of fifteen men. They had another crew of fifteen men who worked the ranges, and they had another crew of fifteen cowboys who merely trailed the cattle from the ranch to Elko, the shipping point.

All supplies went for the Spanish ranch, because of its location and the types of winter—the winter before I was there in '21, 1920, apparently the temperature had been below sixty [degrees] below zero, and they hadn't seen the ground for several months. I worked there in 1922, and the second time around in 1923—and we started feedin' cattle on horses and sleds on Thanksgiving Day, and I left there on the fifteenth of May of that year, and we were still feeding with sleds and horses; and I never seen any bare ground since early December.

Now I'm goin' to my friend Doby Doc—Robert F. Caudill. And I'll just make my statements as I knew him, and from the newspapers. He apparently was from a banking family in Texas, the Caudills, and was a lawyer by education. He apparently came to Nevada when he was discharged from the Army right at the end of World War I.

And the first I ever heard of him was when there was a federal suit filed in Carson City against Robert F. Caudill and others for runnin' what the government felt was a business of acquirin' unpurchased merchandise in boxcars on the railroads and sellin' it. The government filed in the federal courts a suit against him for possession of illegal merchandise. This was all taken from the newspapers. They had, accordin' to the paper, thirty-five federal jury men, and they held three trials at the federal court in Carson City, and each time he was turned free. I believe the last article in the paper about him was that they never even fined him. The only fine he got out of this problem with the federal government didn't involve the federal government, but it involved his wife. He was charged at the end of the third trial for mistreatin' his wife at the Golden Hotel in Reno, and I believe his total fine for that charge was thirty-five dollars.

Following that, when I went to the Spanish ranch as a bookkeeper in '21, Doby Doc, or Robert F. Caudill (the same person), had been a bookkeeper there, just previous to my time, and had gotten into some kind of trouble with the Union Land and Cattle Company, where they accused him in the papers of misappropriating some of their money. And Ray Frazier, accountant for the Union Land and Cattle Company, and another unnamed person went to the Spanish ranch and checked the books. In their work they found two sets of books: one you could read and balance; the

other set of books was in a backhand writing which you couldn't read. As a result, they couldn't come to any charges, and the case was dropped.

When I went to work at the Spanish ranch, under the bed—mattress—which Doc had been using, was several copies of San Francisco papers, accusin' Doby Doc of running a meat company—one or more—in the Los Angeles area with government meats; he was a commissary man apparently in the World War I Army. The federal courts had a complaint sworn against him for his arrest. Accordin' to the papers, there was two men came to Elko, where Doby Doc by that time was out on the Owyhee Desert where he acquired his name of Doby Doc from buildin' a house out of adobe out there. The two men had the papers sworn out for his arrest, and went out to arrest him on the desert which was over a hundred miles from Elko.

When they got out there and found his house (he was in his house), they approached him at the door and told him who they were and the papers they had. And bein' a lawyer, he looked at the papers and said, "Well, you have the wrong papers. You can't come in the house. You'll have to go back to Elko and get the right papers. When you come back, I'll be here." Which they did—they served him, took him to San Francisco. The newspapers came out there and said that he'd been indicted, and had retained a famous criminal lawyer in San Francisco at that time by the name of McNabney for a fee of five thousand dollars. The next papers come out and said that Doby Doc or Robert F. Caudill, however you want to write it, had named eighteen high-ranking Army officers who were partners with him in the meat operation in the Army. The next paper came out the next day and says, "Doby Doc is released, no indictment."

I talked to him about it after I found the papers, and he said at that time he had five thousand dollars in cash. And he gave all of it to McNabney, the lawyer, and came home.

Following that time, and after he was no longer working with the Union Land and Cattle Company, he became pretty heavily involved in bootlegging. I sold him lots of corn and copper plates and things to make whiskey from the Sewell store. And for a certain amount of time he operated on a wholesale basis on the desert. Later on he moved to Elko, acquired an old building, and decided to make it two stories. When he put the scaffolding up for the second story, at the top of the scaffolding, there was always a gallon jug of bootleg whiskey.

The sheriff in Elko, Mr. Harris, was of course under heavy pressure, as Doby Doc had made the Indians with wheelbarrows go up the ramp with the construction material, and at the top they had this gallon of whiskey all the time. So the sheriff decided on a scheme. He had one of his men go up that ramp and get the gallon of whiskey off there, and then he himself waited over at the railroad track, accordin' to history, for that gallon of whiskey to come over, so he could arrest Doby Doc. Between the two of 'em, they fumbled the jar and dropped the whiskey and broke it on the railroad track. So this is all fact, according to the Elko paper.

However, the sheriff arrested him, and he was put in the Elko County jail. But Doby Doc was a tremendous cook, a very fine cook. And by the end of two weeks, according to the Elko paper, there were so many of the Elko businessmen comin' up to the jail for lunch that they actually turned him out because he turned out to be too much of a problem to put in jail.

Generally, following that area, he picked up some of the old Palisade railroad cars, a

few antiques. And I believe one of the things he bought was the old Austin jail and had a kind of a museum in Elko until such time as Las Vegas—El Rancho—came into existence. Then he took his antiques and moved down to Vegas. Then following that, he opened kind of a museum out at Boulder City (just before you enter Boulder City), and had some llamas, and his antiques and the old things he'd gathered along the way.

And then when the war came on, he bought a piece of land out in the desert near Las Vegas and started to dig a hole in the ground, a big one, for an air-raid shelter. And the sheriff never bothered him till about the time he had it completed. Doby Doc told me himself that the sheriff came out and made him fill the hole. He was afraid that he'd have women and whiskey and gambling and everything, so they just made him fill in the hole—he told me this himself personally.

I think the final thing of that is when I used to tell my wife about Doby Doc before she met him, she thought of Doby Doc as kind of a myth until she actually met him. And one morning when we were up early in Las Vegas goin' to breakfast, and I saw Doby Doc coming down the street—. Incidentally, previous to that time, he always dressed more or less like a railroad man with an old pair of striped bib overalls and a white shirt and a black shoestring for a tie. But this mornin' he was really dressed up in his tuxedo and his little black tie. I introduced him to my wife, and he always called me "Charlie" for some reason, havin' known him in Elko so long. He made such a fuss over my wife—"My dear, how are you? You're lookin' wonderful! I never saw you look so good!" He'd never seen her before in his life!

We visited. And after we left, my wife said, "Did you see those Woolworth diamonds he was wearin'?"

And I told her, "Doby Doc don't wear Woolworth diamonds. Those diamonds he was wearin' were real diamonds!"

Following that, the Horseshoe Club in Las Vegas became involved in an income tax lawsuit regardin' the Horseshoe Club. And the owner, Benny Binion, was finally indicted and sentenced to prison, at which time he put his friend Doby Doc in charge of his Horseshoe Club operation while he was in prison with the warnin', "Please don't steal too much. Don't steal more than \$100 a day from me now."

It was always quite a shock to the people in Vegas when he put Doby Doc in charge, because he had a son that was pretty well acquainted with the gaming business. But Doby Doc ran it durin' Binion's time in the prison.

Doby Doc later settled in Pahrump, and I believe had moved from Pahrump back into Las Vegas when he passed away. Now that is my recollection of what I knew about Doby Doc.

MEN'S WORK ON THE RANCH

Well, I was gonna talk a little bit about a day's work; I had in mind on these ranches what a day's work consisted of. You generally got up about 5:00 a.m. in the morning year-round. 'Course, in the wintertime you wandered around in the dark with a kerosene lantern. You went to the barns—workin' horses—fed your horses hay and grain, cleaned the stalls out, and generally had a workin' team of two to eight horses, accordin' to what you were doing.

They generally ate breakfast at about 6:00 a.m. And I thought I'd put this in because I remember a town girl who came to breakfast one morning. And it consisted of generally hot mush, eggs, hot biscuits, potatoes,

coffee, hotcakes, ham or bacon or steak. This assortment of breakfast foods on the table just about floored her! She'd never seen a breakfast like that!

You were generally on the way to the fields to do your day's work by seven o'clock in the morning, with plowing, disking, seeding, harrowing, whatever it was. Generally stay out in the field and work till about eleven-thirty, and you came back in, had to feed and water your horses. Noontime, you had your lunch, which at that time was called a dinner instead of lunch. You had about an hour off for your break there. By one o'clock you were back to the fields for the afternoon's work.

Generally, you worked till about five or 5:30, and back to barn, unharness the horses, feed and water. Six o'clock in the evening you had dinner, and noontime was dinner, too, in those days. You were generally in bed by seven or eight o'clock, because after a day like that, you were very tired of the physical work.

Worked six days a week. You were paid a dollar a day. And durin' the hay time they paid two dollars a day. All the work in those years was done with horses and mules; there was no tractors or power equipment of any kind.

Sundays we spent most of the morning taking our weekly bath. We had no hot water, showers at that time. You had to warm your water over an open stove, and then generally wash up and wash our clothes. By the afternoon, you were ready for a little recreation, which might consist of playin' horseshoes or huntin' a little bit. Some of the ranch hands were amateur miners, prospecting in the hills around the area. If you worked as a cowboy, it was a little different, inasmuch as there was no Sunday as a holiday for the cowboys. In fact, there were no holidays on the ranches, but you did have Sundays off. With workin' on the range, you just worked straight through.

I worked at the Nevada-California Land and Livestock Company at Smoke Creek, and Gerlach Land and Cattle Company at Gerlach, and the Spanish ranch at Tuscarora, Nevada.

Incidentally, all of these places provided very good food and plenty of it. But the problem I'll mention is the difference in good food and good cooks. When you had good food and good cooks, you really ate well. When you still had good food with a poor cook, you didn't eat very well. It wasn't the food that made the difference, it was the cook.

Sometimes the crews at Constantia consisted of as high as 325 men. There'd be 125 men to a breakfast sometimes because it was kind of a holding spot for the Smoke Creek and Constantia Company, and then they would move from there to the other ranches.

While I was still a kid in Reno, I was hiring men. My dad would call up—he was superintendent—and want some men, and I was on Commercial Row, when I was sixteen or seventeen years old, in the bars, huntin' for some of the men who had come in for a vacation, and tryin' to find new men to go out to work. Generally you had to wake and sober them up—they'd had a little celebration—you generally had to make sure they got on a train. And we paid their fare back to Constantia; it generally cost five dollars apiece to get 'em back there. And when they got back to the ranch, they were generally good for a year before they'd come back to town again—work straight through, do very well.

At Gerlach, Nevada, hiring men was a very interesting deal, especially for the hayfields. The Western Pacific Railroad at that time was what was called a "red card" railroad. In other words, if you were an IWW, Industrial Worker of the World, you could travel on the boxcars and so forth with[out] paying any transportation. Lots of the conductors and brakemen were "red card" men.

Incidentally, one day talkin' to Joe McDonald, who was a newspaperman of some importance years later, back in those days he told me that as a journalist, he had to carry a "red card" also. I was quite surprised!

But at Gerlach, they had a setup at their livestock yards, and they had a business agent—the IWWs. And when he'd see you in town, he'd come up and talk to you; you'd tell him how many men you needed and what you were payin' (he knew that the Gerlach Land and Livestock was a good outfit).

Incidentally, we always got very good men. However, we did have one riot in the hayfield with the men. It turned out that one of the men he gave us was a booster or somethin' for the IWW, and the others were opposed to him. And one day when we were stackin' hay in the morning, they practically went on a strike, and they went to the house—went in an old shed there and had a big meeting amongst themselves. Even the cook that we had at this operation was an IWW. And after one o'clock, when we went back to the field to work, everybody went back to work except this one man. How they settled their problems amongst themselves I don't know. But he left and was gone from there.

The Miller and Lux people at that same time were operatin' out of Gerlach for Soldier Meadows. And they've also hired help in Gerlach under the same conditions. But they had a little bad reputation of pay and working conditions and poor food. So we always thought we got the best men with our operation.

This next thing I'm gonna talk about is a day when I left the Spanish ranch in December, 1921, just before Christmas. The country was snowed in at that time, and we had been feeding cattle with horses and sleds for a month or more. The day I left, the

company took myself and another person to what was called the Taylor Canyon ranch, with sleighs, at the head of this Independence Valley where the Spanish ranch was located. They took us up on sleighs and horses. The next day we were gonna go to Elko. When we got to the Taylor Canyon ranch— they kept a man and his wife there, and they had small children and a lot of cattle, and everybody was in bed. And to this day, I don't know why we guessed what was wrong with them; they were very ill and very weak. And we decided they had ptomaine poisoning. And at that time, as far as we knew, the big main treatment for ptomaine poisoning was mustard and hot water. Regular household mustard. And we fixed them up a dose of mustard and hot water, and we fed the cattle that night, and the next morning they were all back in good shape and they were cured. How we ever decided ptomaine poisoning was what had happened—.

Anyhow, inasmuch as the stage line ran every day from Tuscarora to Elko and vice versa, and the Taylor Canyon ranch was about ten miles east of Tuscarora, we called the stage man and said that we were gonna walk up to the next station, which was the Meadows on the way to Elko, and we'd leave our luggage out by the mailbox on the road, if he'd pick it up. And then we'd walk up there and go with him. And so we started walkin' up there in the snow. And the farther we walked, the deeper the snow got; it was uphill. But we finally made it. But when we got there, the man who was tendin' that station for the stage line was sick in bed. We never did know what was wrong with him. But we took care of the horses and got the horses ready for the stage man when he came along with the mail and so forth. And we all got up on the snow sled and started for Elko. 'Course, the distance from where we were to

Elko was about seventy miles. And the snow was real deep.

The regular driver had a new driver with him. And about halfway between Taylor Canyon and Dinner Station, they discussed the team of four horses on the sled, and decided that they would try to put one of the lead horses on the wheel and see how it worked. There was actually four of us on the sled: the driver and his helper, the two of us. But the man unhitched the lead horse before he brought him back and put him on the wheel—just unhitched him and left him loose, and went over to unhitch the wheel horse. The lead horse ran away with the harness and everything, and left us with three horses and a big sled.

But we were lucky. There was one of the coyote trappers in that country out that day lookin' for his traps under the snow, and he happened to find this horse with a harness on it, and he brought the horse back.

The snow at this time was from two to four feet deep practically everywhere, and the temperature was down below zero—at about zero. We got the horse back on and that—from there we were able to get to Dinner Station, which was about twenty miles north of Elko, where we had lunch.

While we were there at the Dinner Station eatin', George Carat from the Y-P had decided to take two or three of his people to Elko in a car. And when he went by the Dinner Station on top of that snow, he was practically flyin'.

After we ate, we started for Elko. And we got about halfway there, and we found George Garat and his men stuck in the snow. It was gettin' dark. And we didn't go by 'em; we hooked onto their car and tried to pull it back where they might get going. But in the darkness, the sled tipped over with the mail and everything on it. We didn't get the car back on the road, but we got it up—the

mail and the freight we had, we got it back on the sled. His men got on the sled with us.

And we went down the road about a mile or two, and finally George Garat says, "Well, wait a minute, I'm short a man." And he counted his men, and we went back, and one of his men that he had with him had—when the sled tipped over, had got buried in the snow. And we went back and then were lucky enough to find him.

Well, we went on, headed for Elko, and we got down near what was called Eight Mile, where we changed horses again. To someone I said, "Boy, we're sittin' on somethin' cold!" We were at zero temperature.

And the driver said, "Oh no, no, we're sittin' on a canvas." And we got to lookin' around, and we were sittin' on a frozen beef!

We got into Elko that night after dark, after being out there all day, and went and stayed at the Mayer Hotel. Now, the Mayer Hotel at that time was heated by steam, hot water radiators. And in the old-time radiators, they had a piece of tin on the top, which you've seen. We could sit on that tin and not even feel the heat.

We finally got somethin' to eat. And I went to bed and filled up a tub with hot water and thawed myself out. But I've always thought to this day, if we'd've had anybody with us that day who was not acclimated and out in those conditions, they would have froze to death.

Incidentally, the first time I ever left from Elko to Tuscarora and the Spanish ranch, we started out at Elko with the mail contract, which was the stage line. And we traveled the first eight miles in a truck. We traveled the next fifty miles on sleds, with horses. Then we came to the Meadows, and there was a creek that ran down the canyon there. And we left the sled there; we got a buckboard and put the mail sacks in the buckboard, and we drove

from the Meadows down to Taylor Canyon and into Tuscarora.

Sewell brothers of Elko, who had a grocery store, had the contract for the mail delivery from Elko to Tuscarora. Their driver was a man by the name of Mr. Love, who was quite a teamster at that time. I think that's all I'll say on that. Where do we go from there? That's enough, do you think?

In the wild horse problem, which has been discussed so much locally and nationally in the past few years, at two occasions in my life I was involved with running horses from the range. At that time they were known as generally unbranded work horses that the ranchers turned out in the wintertime to rustle for their own feed, so they wouldn't have to feed 'em. And then you had just the unbranded horses, lots of times, there was a question of who owned them at different times. But to actually say that they were "wild horses," I would have to question that, and I'd have to have somebody point out to me, what is a mustang? I have seen some of these smaller horses; we always considered 'em, just inbred horses on the ranges that wouldn't support 'em, and so forth. But to actually say that this is a mustang, I would have to have somebody point out what makes a mustang.

For instance, on the Spanish ranch, and the Gerlach Land and Livestock and Constantia, all operated the same. In the fall of the year, they turned their work horses that they didn't need for winter operation out on the range to winter for themselves on what feed they could find. Come spring, you'd go out and run horses in.

One of the places where we ran horses was on top of Donnelly Mountain, which is north of Gerlach. It has a government elevation stake of eleven thousand feet up there. And come the spring of the year, we would go up and get those horses we had turned out in the

winter and fall—the work horses—we had trouble with our own horses and ourselves because of thin air. We couldn't hardly catch the work horses! But they were not wild horses; they were work horses.

We had the same situation at the Spanish ranch on the mountains to the south and west of the Spanish ranch. At Constantia they ran most of their horses in the wintertime up on top of Tule Mountain, which is a mountain layin' to the west of Pyramid Lake. That's exactly how I felt about it.

It was somethin' to run the horses, through, because when you went out to run wild horses or these work horses to get 'em back in, you generally took a group of gentle horses along—twenty-five, thirty, forty—and would put them in a canyon or somewhere where you were gonna head the other horses to. Sometimes you had corrals, but most of the time you just had a bunch of work horses, gentle horses. And then you would position your riders along the trail. The group that was gonna start 'em would go up the mountain, to the top, and get 'em together, started down this canyon. And then they'd have us hidden behind the rocks or somethin' along the trail to keep 'em in that canyon. As they went by, why, the man who was runnin' 'em in would drop out, and you'd pick 'em up, and we'd run 'em to the bottom of the canyon. We ran this group of wild horses into the group of tame horses, and they generally would stop right there. There was occasions where there were corrals, but corrals were a little dangerous because the wild horses were inclined to go right on through the corrals that you had built.

How many horses would you see in these bunches that you rounded up?

Well, when we ran horses, we generally ran horses about two or three weeks. And

the number of horses you would have would depend if you were at Constantia, which was a smaller outfit; Gerlach, which was bigger than Constantia; and the Spanish ranch. And you probably rounded up around three hundred horses every spring, besides the horses you had on the ranch who had been workin' all winter. And then, as I said before, all your work was done at that time with horses and mules, and they'd put 'em back in the hay fields to work.

'Course, they didn't quiet down too easily. The Spanish ranch, particularly, they kept two men or three men in the field all the time on horseback with lariats to rope the runaways. With horses that hadn't been workin' all winter and sometimes men who didn't know too much about ridin' or drivin' horses, you would have lots of runaways, and these cowboys would be out there with saddle horse and lariat to rope the runaways when they ran away with the rake or the mower, whatever it was, get her back together.

And that was the way they handled work horses. Now on the horse they used for cattle work, especially on the Spanish ranch, where they worked so many cowboys, they kept two or three men breakin' horses year-round on the ranch, and generally had two men breakin' saddle horses and one man breakin' work horses.

In most cases, except the Spanish ranch, when they broke horses for work horses, they generally worked 'em on a cart, broke 'em for work. At the Spanish ranch, they had a unique system. They had a big cart with a long tongue on it and one seat on the back of the cart. And they had a gentle horse that they hooked on one side of the cart. And they'd take these unbroken horses and hook 'em up to the gentle horse on the other side, and make no effort to control 'em at all— get in the cart and get a whip. They'd head 'em down the country at full speed. And

the gentle horse was runnin' along with them. And as the unbroken horse got tired, why, you hit it some more with the whip. By the time you got back, you had a pretty gentle horse. That was the way it was done.

The saddle horses, of course, were broken different ways accordin' to the cowboys you had to break the saddle horses. Some of 'em sacked 'em—about what you see today—shake a sack on 'em to make 'em gentle. The other cowboys'd just saddle 'em up and get on 'em and let 'em buck themselves out.

The cowboys that worked on the Spanish ranch generally had a string of ten horses each. And if there was fifteen of us workin' cattle in the field ther'd be a hundred and fifty horses, but we'd only ride one horse a day, and it keeps changin'. And then every two or three months they would take all those gentle horses away from you. They'd give you unbroken—or horses that had been broken not to buck, had been put in the snaffle bit, hackamore, and the spade bit, in which you had rodeo about every three months on the ranch when they took the gentle horses away which you had been riding, and given these newly-broken ones. Talk about rodeos.

They usually had two men breakin' the saddle horses, but one day at the Spanish ranch, both the men breakin' the horses for saddle purposes quit. They got extra pay for that type of work. They paid generally seventy-five dollars a month to the men who were riding these horses. And the superintendent, George Calligan, asked for volunteers if anybody wanted to take the job of breakin' the saddle horses.

A man there, Henry Tomkins, who had worked on the ranch for a long time said, yeah, he'd take the job. Nobody knew he could ride at all! And then Calligan asked him who he wanted as a helper, and he said nobody; he'd do it himself. He took the job,

and he had no problems at all. He could really ride those horses. We found out afterwards, he had worked for Dick Magee out of Battle Mountain up on the side of the mountain when Dick Magee did nothin' but break polo horses.

Dick Magee's father, of course, was an early days famous banker in the San Francisco area—very wealthy people. And Dick was just a polo player and trained polo horses on that particular ranch that he had out of Battle Mountain. Years later, he went to the Grass Valley ranch, which was north of Austin to the Grass Valley Land and Cattle Company.

Dick Magee was a single person, a real westerner, a cowboy with generally a broken-down old car of some kind. They claim that his aunts bought the Grass Valley Land and Cattle Company for him, which was a very fine ranch north of Austin, Nevada. And he used to come to Reno all the time in this old car, and he'd have to stop every few miles and fill the radiator with water; it leaked. But he came by the ranch down the canyon, the Williams ranch, which the Sierra Pacific Power Company owns now. And it was owned at that time by Mr. and Mrs. Beverly Blackmer. MV wife's father, Bill Stevenson, was superintendent for them. He and Dick became quite friendly.

As far as I know at the present time, Dick Magee is still playin' polo and breakin' polo horses at Oakdale, California. And Molly Flagg remarried; she's now Mrs. Knudtsen.

WORK AS AN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENT

I came back to Reno from the contract at Eagle Falls, and had been in town a few days when I received a call from Cecil [W.] Creel, who was director of Agricultural Extension for the state of Nevada. And he offered me a job as assistant county agriculture agent in Washoe County. The actual agent at that time was a man by the name of Thomas [P.] Buckman. That was in the fall of 1925, about August, I believe. Mr. Buckman was busy with the state fair at Fallon, so I became pretty active as agricultural extension agent while he worked at the fair at Fallon.

BOCA DAM AND RESERVOIR

In the extension work, I stayed there from 1925 till January the first, 1929 [when] I left Reno and went to Alliance, Ohio. And I would guess that my big, main project all those years was Boca Dam. While I didn't complete the petitions for elections for Boca Dam, I had to do all the preliminary work, and put the thing together for the petitions, so an election could be held.

The election was held in the spring, apparently, of 1930, and Boca Dam was soon constructed after that. However, to get the funds, we had to send a committee to Washington, D.C. for federal appropriations. That committee consisted of Art Peckham, Herb Nichols, and Mr. [Arthur W.] Kleppe. This was Ernest Kleppe's father. Ernest Kleppe afterwards was county commissioner for several years here.

They went back to Washington, with the purpose of seem Senator Tasker [L.] Oddie, who was United States Senator, Republican senator, at that time, but by chance, they ran into Senator Key Pittman when they got back there, on the street apparently. And Mr. Peckham told me that Pittman asked them what they were back for, and they told 'em they were back to see if they could get money for construction for Boca Dam.

The next morning they received a call from Senator Pittman, and they went to his office, and he had arranged overnight for that commitment to build a dam. But for a peculiarity in the commitment, which I never

understood— Mr. Peckham told me—that Pittman said there was to be no publicity that he got the money for the construction of the dam, because he was a Democrat at that time, and the president of the United States was Herbert Hoover. Just what his reason was, I never knew.

'Course Boca Dam was constructed and finished, I believe, by 1935, as a flood control dam, in connection with the Fallon reclamation project.

What did you do as you were making the plans for the dam? Did you work on the surveys, or did you go out to the survey areas?

No, no, my job was gettin' the state irrigation district act in such a position it could be used to conduct the petition and formulation of the Washoe County irrigation district, and arrange for the taxes. Even though the money was provided by the federal government, the irrigation district was bonded to repay that money to the federal government, which has, at the present time of 1981, has all been done, except a few bonds that are out that they're unable to locate the people who have 'em.

The site of Boca Dam in the 1910s and 1920s and thirties was owned by the Union Ice Company. And in the wintertime, the railroad company contracted the Union Ice Company for all their ice for the refrigeration on their railroad trains. It made quite a nice break for the college students in this area in the winter vacation, because the ice cutting generally came about the same time as vacation—they had jobs cutting ice durin' that time.

But about 1928, one day a man came into my office in the Agricultural Extension Service, and introduced himself as the president of the Union Ice Company, and

said they were building an artificial ice plant in Sparks, and he would like to give the Boca Dam site to the farmers of Washoe County. They had no use for it.

As an agricultural extension agent, I called a meeting of the farmers, and we talked about whether we'd accept that plant—or the ice ponds, which they actually were—that the Union Ice Company had offered to give 'em at no charge. They didn't expect to use 'em anymore. And believe it or not, the farmers decided not to accept the gift.

Within a few short years, they bought the Boca Dam site, to build a dam, after turnin' it down when it was free.

Why did they turn it down?

I have no idea. They didn't accept it. I can find the president's name for you, in the Union Ice, because the man that's here in town that ran the Union Ice later, I see him occasionally, and he knows who that president was. I never made any note of the name even, but [chuckle] it was a little peculiar, but that's what happened.

Did they debate this or anything?

Oh yes, they discussed it very thoroughly—no rushin' — but just talked it over and everything, and they decided not to accept the ponds which they could've had, *as a gift*, simply because the man wanted to do something for the area where he got most of his help when he was cuttin' ice in the wintertime.

And they, the farmers of course, gettin' back to Boca Dam, which would probably just have something to do with why they didn't accept it—for years and years before Boca Dam was built, there was a continual difference of opinion in the area about where

that dam should be built. Different groups of individuals and different farm people and the different companies that owned sites up there, had an idea where the dam should be built, and Boca Dam was just one group, Stampede was another group.

In fact, one time, the actual site of the reservoir or dam came pret' near to bein' built in our Spanish Springs Valley, out of Reno. That was considered very, very seriously as a location where the dam should be. They talked about puttin' the dam in the river, but of course, that'd've been below the agriculture area, and dropped that. But Spanish Springs was quite a prominent place for a dam at one time. They finally, in 1929, after years of squabblin', and no damsites—as I've said before, one night at midnight in the old YMCA—they got together and decided that they would concentrate at Boca Dam, and try to get it built there, after years of in-fighting, I guess you'd call it—political fighting.

In fact, they went so far one time as to bring the former president of Stanford University to Reno to discuss the damsites. His name was Mr. [Ray Lyman] Wilbur. He was afterwards quite prominent in the Hoover administration. He had two or three meetings in Reno on the locations of the damsites.

And I imagine this has a lot to do with why they didn't accept the offer from the president of the Union Ice Company, cause of the location.

Now, where do we go from there?

You were going to talk about the intricacies of circulating those petitions after it was decided to—.

Well, of course, I think as I've said before when they designated me to try to get the Boca Dam site financed and built, that I was not to have any contact with any lawyers or

engineers. Every little group of farmers had a lawyer representin' 'em, and an engineer.

To start with, I naturally went to the state engineer's office to get a copy of the irrigation act. And I discovered the act was so old that it had to be rewritten. And in my contact in gettin' it rewritten, I wound up with me. My main first contact was district attorney in Reno and Washoe County, Lester Sumerfield. But for various reasons, he didn't offer to help any. Probably for legal reasons, thinkin' it was business for other lawyers.

So I undertook to rewrite the irrigation act, and I imagine, without lookin' it up, it probably is still about as I rewrote it. Not havin' any background, I naturally wrote it to fit our situation in here.

The actual circulation of the petition wasn't done by me, it was done by the farm people—the Farm Bureau people. And as I said before, after the petition was circulated and they had a vote and decided to build a dam, they sent their three representatives to Washington, D.C to get the dam financed, which they were very successful in doing.

The dam itself was really built because the government overestimated the amount of water they had for the Fallon reclamation project, when they built the dam, Lahontan Dam. I believe at that time when they built the darn, they figured they had sufficient water for about approximately 120,000 acres of land. When it actually got in operation, they couldn't supply that, and they had to drop large areas out that they had put in the reclamation district. For instance, Soda Lake area was completely dropped.

The first thing they did before they more or less forced this area into the dam situation, was to hire an engineer by the name of Osgood, *quietly*. The farmers in this area were not aware that Mr. Osgood was workin' for them, and he surveyed all the water in the

Reno areas at nighttime. Any extra water ran down the road or any off of the farms, he made a note of. And then they cut down the size of the irrigation district to around 70,000 acres.

And that brought on a lawsuit, which was, and probably is still in the court, of the Orr Ditch decree. However, it was in the court before the actual water rights in this area were cleared up; for a sum total of forty-three years, before they decided about the allotment of the water. And of course today, you still occasionally have the same problem, which is in the federal courts right at the present time, because the Indians at Pyramid Lake took no part in the Washoe County Water Conservation District formation—they were asked to, but they refused to, sayin' that Uncle Sam would take care of 'em.

Now, some fifty years later, they're of course, tryin' to claim water rights on the basis of a reservation, which apparently is not a reservation. It apparently just was signed by President Grant as a fish hatchery, not as a reclamation project.

However, the dam has served a very valuable purpose in flood controls. And of course, since that time, there's been—Stampede Dam's been built and there's another dam up there, what's the name of it? Prosser Creek.

Back in the 1930s, after the dam was fairly well underway, a group of farmers and an attorney by the name of William Kearney in Reno, tried to get the operation stopped entirely because of the tax on the thing. I think that's all I want to say on that, on Boca Dam.

In regards to Mr. Kearney, William Kearney, and a situation not havin' any connection with Boca Dam: in the canyon below Reno, with two different families runnin' sheep, one of the families was an Italian family by the name of Peri, and the other person—I can't recall his name—he was

Basque. They got into a quarrel over the range, and the Basque retained Bill Kearney as his lawyer to go down and arbitrate the situation.

Well, Mr. Kearney happened to choose a Saturday afternoon to go down and talk to the Peris about his client's problem. And they immediately kidnapped Mr. Kearney. He was out of Washoe County, he had no jurisdiction, he was in Storey County. And the county seat of Storey County, of course, was Virginia City, and they put him in the car and took him through Reno and up to Virginia City, and had him arrested for trespassing. And he couldn't get out till Monday, because it was Saturday. So he was in jail up there Saturday and Sunday night, because of his effort to represent his client.

4-H CLUBS

At that time, in the extension service, one of the big projects in the area was the alfalfa weevil, which was destroying the alfalfa crops. We worked on that for a considerable time, until they came up with a spray that pretty much took care of that, and also the University at that time, was developing a type of alfalfa that was resistant to the weevil.

In the extension service, I did something besides the Boca Dam, of course, in the three and a half years I was there. I was very interested in 4-H club work, and I had some very good livestock-judging teams that won several first places in it.

The 4-H itself was kinda struggling along with finances and conducted a little dance about once every three or four weeks to raise a little money. Sometimes they raised forty or fifty dollars. Then I came up with the idea of having an annual event called the Harvest Ball, once a year. In order to make it go, I had to talk to the local musicians, because they were disturbed with these little 4-H club dances every few months; it interfered

with their Saturday night dances. So we put the first Harvest Ball on, and wound up with about two thousand dollars in profit off of the ball. However, we had an agreement with the musicians in Reno, that we would just have the one event for the 4-H once a year, which was satisfactory to both of us.

The Harvest Ball was held for several years, and then finally dropped because somebody, apparently, didn't want to do the work in the thing. And that was in the 4-H department.

You were quite well known for the success of your 4-H groups at that time.

Yeah, but it's, as time goes on, what you did.

Well, you might tell me about some of your leaders, and what some of the kids did. You had to recruit leaders for those groups.

At that time, you didn't have—in the men's 4-H—you didn't have any leaders. The agricultural extension agent was the 4-H club leader, and the extension agent. You just carried on your 4-H projects as part of your regular work.

Now, in the girls' 4-H, in which I wasn't involved, they had these homemaker clubs, and had women—local women—who acted as leaders in there, but not in the boys' department.

Was that Hazel Zimmerman?

Hazel Zimmerman was the home demonstration agent, as they called those at that time, and all the time I was in there.

How about some of the young fellows that you made into good cattle raisers? You must have some that you're really proud of.

Well, I guess the [shows pictures]—that's the picture over there, of some of 'em, includin' myself.* I don't know where she got these [pictures].

4-H projects at that time, generally consisted of dairy projects, which was dairy clubs and poultry clubs. And you had your clubs that were interested in farm crops, grains, and potatoes, and alfalfa. They had their annual 4-H camp every year, and it was held at the University farm on South Virginia, which later was, for a good many years, part of the Redfield estate.

Afterwards, the 4-H camp was moved to Lake Tahoe, through the purchase of property from the Parks—Wallace Parks up in the Gardnerville country. That's where the present camp is now.

I don't recall, many of the people we ever had in 4-H, that went through and followed on those projects afterwards. As they grew up, they went into various other fields. I think I just have to leave it at that.

We came back again into 4-H work when I ran the state fair, both in Fallon and here. When we started the Washoe County Fair, which is now the Nevada State Fair, I think the 4-H membership in Washoe County at that time, was around 150 students. By the time we left there in 1970, it was up to around twelve or thirteen hundred. But the big change that come there, is when the Extension Service decided to do 4-H club work in the towns, as well as in the county.

At the time I was in the 4-H, you were limited to agriculture, memberships didn't do the town 4-H at all. You're probably aware now, that the girls in town, and the boys, have

*See Thornton papers, University of Nevada-Reno Library.

their dog clubs, and their horse clubs, and the various different types of clubs.

One of our big projects, too, wasn't particularly in the 4-H, was the "Dairy Day" we held at the Model Dairy on Peckham Lane. That turned out to be quite an annual project. People came and we had a dairy day, and dairy-cattle dairy judging, and a big dairy lunch. I guess that's about it on the extension agency.

I know you're interested in my 4-H club work. We carried it along, of course, and it was part of the extension program. A man and a woman—myself and Miss Zimmerman—were two agents, and she had her home demonstration work, along with the 4-H girls' work, and I had the regular farm extension work, along with the 4-H boys' work, in there. And it was limited at that time to *farms* only. They didn't invade the city with their 4-H club work, they stayed out in the county.

I just thought you might like to say some more about that. You are kind of famous for all of the work that you have done with young people. Not just then, but later, in the fairs and so forth.

Well, we did a lot of work. Well, 'course, in the fair work, although maybe I was a little mercenary with the 4-H to a certain extent, because I believed in 4-H work and I always promoted it in all my fairs. And I had a little mercenary racket in the thing, because I figured if you had good 4-H club work in the fairs, and give 'em passes and everything, that they would have twelve months a year advertising for the fair, as the year went on.

Most of the kids got their first checks out of these fair, 4-H board programs, and lots of times they kept their checks at home and framed 'em, and they'd never come through the bank. You'd call up their folks and say, "Where's Johnny's check?"

"Oh, he's got it pinned up in the bedroom. It's the first check he's ever got." Things like that.

We had some 4-H judging teams, both Miss Zimmerman and myself, that attended these 4-H contests, and boys and girls. 'Course, the boys' projects were mostly beef, cattle, and livestock judging. We attended the Pacific International Exposition in Portland, several times, and did fairly well up there.

WESTERN NEVADA DEPRESSION RELIEF

I wanted to get ahold of the name of this company when I went to—the Suburban Light and Power Company. It was in January, 1929, my wife and I left Reno and went to Alliance, Ohio, and went to work for a public utility company as an agriculture representative, contactin' the farm people back there. We were back there about six months, when the Depression came on, and the utility company we were with—well, it was quite large. Actually, at that particular time, it owned all the public utilities in the Hawaiian Islands, besides some in North Carolina, but they were operatin' off the stock market, and as the stock market collapsed there, the utility company also went into receivership, I guess you'd say, not into bankruptcy, back there.

We became pretty well acquainted with I guess what you'd call the southeastern part of Ohio, where most of the utilities were. 'Round Canton, Ohio, and Youngstown, and Lima. One of the interesting things that happened in that, the utilities had had a big telephone service in an area surrounding Hinkley, Ohio, which is the home of the Buzzards [chuckle].

And for some reason, some of those farmers out there got mad at the telephone company; had all the phones taken out, a big area. And I was assigned to a project to contact those farmers, and see if they could get 'em to put their phones back in, at which I had no luck. They all told me the same thing, "No more telephones. All our wives do is talk on the phone all day, and we don't want any more phones." I had no luck at all. Never got a one of 'em to put their phone back in.

What caused the uproar in the first place?

Oh, they got mad about—I don't know what—they had 'em take 'em out. They believed it, and they were out. You couldn't talk to 'em at all. "No, we don't want any telephones. The women would spend too much time visiting (gossip)," they said.

We left Ohio and came back to Reno by train, and arrived here, I believe, on the mornin' of July 4, 1929. And for some reason or other, we walked downtown in Reno, and walked over by the corner of Second

and Virginia Street, and on the southwest corner, which was the location of the Washoe County bank, was a big sign, "Closed." The Washoe County bank, held a large number of big livestock loans in this area, includin' the Holcomb estate and the Wheeler estate.

The head man of the Washoe County bank was Charles [W.] Mapes, Sr. There were other stockholders, but it was pretty much known as the Mapes bank—the Washoe County bank. As a result of that bank closing, a lot of the large livestock companies went out of business, too, at the same time.

Following that bank closure, the owners and other people organized a corporation which they called the Realization Corporation. They issued stock to the depositors, on the basis of the money they had on deposit on the bank at that time. The stock itself, was accepted in the trade area by some merchants; other people wouldn't accept it. Whatever became of the stock, I have no idea. It just finally, eventually faded out of the picture.

In 1925, I joined the Rotary Club of Reno, and in 1927, I joined the Masonic Lodge Number 35. And durin' those years, I served as post adjutant for the American Legion Darrel Dunkle Post Number 1. And I still belong to all the organizations yet.

I went to work for the Realization Corporation at that time, but I only worked about two months with 'em, because their operation was foreclosing on people that had mortgages, bank mortgages, and I just wasn't the right temperament, I guess, to go out and repossess people's property. You called on 'em, and visited with 'em, and you had the papers in your pocket to take their property over. You'd count their sheep and their cattle and measured the hay, and when you got all done, you just take the papers out of your pocket and say, "Well, the bank's foreclosing." And you took charge of it right there, set up a man

in charge of the operation and went to the next place. And after two or three of those, I quit.

For a short time I was unemployed, and then I eventually bought what was known as the Western Hatchery located on 835837 West Fifth Street in Reno. The property is now occupied by Pay'n'Pak electric concern. I was about one city block west of Fifth and Vine, consisting of between three—five or four acres. It was owned by a man by the name of A. F. Scanavino, who was quite a wealthy person.

And to show you what happened in the Depression, when I went there in 1930 with Scanavino, he was worth about four or five million dollars. Five years later, he had \$47,500 left. Just as a matter of interest to these people, his large holdings were Bank of America stock, and when I went there, it was \$125 a share. Four or five years later, it was two dollars and ten cents a share. But he had all his stock paid for. He hung onto it, and eventually became a millionaire again, because the Bank of America came back.

I was married at that time, and besides runnin' the Western Hatchery, I went to work for Washoe County, as assistant probation officer. And that job turned out to be handling welfare. At the time we left Ohio in June of 1929, the Depression was already on back in Ohio, but it didn't get here for two or three years later, so the welfare was a very minor thing when I went to work for Washoe County in 1930.

But while I was called assistant probation officer, I handled strictly welfare. And it was handled on a pretty informal basis. There was very little hardship, and as people came in, you would discuss with them their issues, and generally give fifteen dollars, or twenty-five, or forty, or all the rent. And I'd go across to the courthouse with a claim, and get the money from the county treasurer, and give 'em

the money. But that was the beginning of the welfare problem for Washoe County. It went along in that basis, and we had no trainin' in welfare. I say "we," but I mean my secretary and I. And we set up our own system in there with the county money, and some state money.

Out of that system, the Salvation Army was our agent for handling all transients. And the transients at that time, consisted of the unemployed who rode the freight trains free. The Salvation Army operated a soup kitchen at 1415 East Fourth Street in Reno. The building belonged to A. Bevilacqua. The unemployed, or transients, whichever you want to call 'em, were entitled to three meals and one night's sleep, and then they had to move on. (Actually, the building is still down there. I went down there the other day and took a look at it. It's a auto parts place now.) They handled thousands of people on the transient scale and, lookin' back over history, I don't recall we ever had a complaint from those transient people.

The Red Cross was set up to handle the veterans—both local and transients—and it was located between the old city hall and the Reno Printing Cornoany on Center Street. There was a woman who was the head of the Red Cross at that time, and with all due respect to women, this type of problem was something that she couldn't handle. It was too emotional. Previous to that time, they had had them on straight relief, so we had to replace her with a man. And also, we suddenly became aware that the Red Cross at that time, and maybe today, consisted of a lot of chiefs and very few Indians. There was always supervisors or area directors or somebody comin' in, and checking the Red Cross. We handled our own office, the local problems, and the local people.

The actual financing at that time was kinda scattered with state money, and federal money, and county money. When the federal government took over, which was in October

1932, that was about the time that the banks were closing.

Under our relief program, if you needed help, you came in and filled out a card and gave us your name and address, and your problems—what you needed—wood, or coal, or groceries, and we didn't ask any questions at first. We merely gave you pretty much what you asked for. Then we inspected your place and called on your home to see if you actually needed it, and if you did, why, we continued.

However, if you were a carpenter or a mason or an automobile mechanic, and a job came up, we would call you, and ask you to go to work as a painter—or whatever it was. And if you didn't go to work—if you had no good reason—we discontinued relief.

But when the federal government took over, a man by the name of Schaffer was appointed, apparently in Washington, and he was from the University of Chicago. He had been appointed on the welfare department, which at that time, didn't exist. All this federal help at the time was handled under the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which was set up primarily to handle large banks and corporations and so forth that failed. But the federal government had no welfare program, so they placed that in charge of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. And the man in charge of the Reconstruction Finance for the United States, was [Charles B.] Charlie Henderson, who had been a former United States Senator from Elko, Nevada, and was a member of the Henderson banking firm or Elko, Nevada.

Mr. Schaffer and I started talkin' at three o'clock in the afternoon, and we never stopped till three o'clock the next morning. He had had no experience in welfare at all—I had had a couple years—and I tried to convince him that our program of givin' you help and then checkin on you, and then continue it or

discontinue it, was sound. For some unknown reason, they wanted to keep these people on welfare so they could study the cases. They had to just find out what was causin' this situation.

I, of course, lost the argument, and up till that time, welfare—we think we handled in a very correct manner. We didn't ask your politics, your religion, or anything. A few days after he was here, I got a call from the governor (who was Governor Balzar at that time, Fred [B.] Balzar), tellin' me that I had to give welfare to a certain man. Now, I said to the governor, "Why, this man is a veteran of the Spanish-American War. He's a labor union leader, and he's gettin' a Veteran's pension."

And the governor said, "Well, Roosevelt's in office and things have changed, and he's a Democrat, and you have to put him on the welfare roll."

I believe durin' that welfare period that I was there, we expended somewhere in the neighborhood of six million dollars of federal money, which was a lot of money in the thirties. And one day I had a discussion with one of our welfare cases, that I had sent to Wisconsin to get him out of the area, and after he'd taken the trip at our expense, he was back and told me he just wanted to visit his family. But talkin' to him, he said, "Who audits this money that you handle?"

As I was not too old at that time, I hadn't thought about that responsibility. And I thought to myself, "When I get back to the office, I better have somebody make an audit." So I called Mr. Creel, and he had an auditor by the name of Bill Stark, William Stark. And they audited our books for those years that we'd been operatin' under federal funds. And of course, we feel pretty good, because the audits show that there was no question about the handling of the funds, and out of every hundred dollars that they

had given to the office, ninety-seven dollars had gone directly for relief, and three dollars for administration.

This administration of the relief at that time was pretty much ahead of the work programs that developed afterwards, like the Public Works and things like that—they came later. We did have some work projects, largely at the University of Nevada, painting and carpentering, and work at the quad over at the University. We had a large crew who worked one whole winter. They took out every other tree in that quad over there, and all we provided was the salary; the University provided the sledgehammers, saws and the wedges.

President Clark, who was president of the University—when we first made the offer to his superintendent of buildings, Joe Lynch, the president was a little skeptical about the program, so he appeared in my office one day to find out if this was all true; that we would pay all the salaries if they just provided the axes and saws and that part of the thing. And then we got into a lot of maintenance at the University in the buildings, besides painting and plastering and roofing and that type of thing. Mainly our other work was snow removal and that type—there was no big snow shovels, just hand shovels—hand shovels and wheelbarrows.

I might mention that I handled all this money and was never under bond. My secretary was Margaret Regan [Nichols], and I got tired of signin' checks, so one day I took her down to the bank and made her signature good, and she was never under bond. And my salary was a sum total of \$150 a month for handling that money.

I finally decided to go to another job; they raised my salary to \$175 a month. I left anyway. The man who took my job was Gilbert Ross, a Democrat. Before I left, the

man who was gonna take my job came into the office, which was in the old State Building where Powning Park is downtown, and when I came back one day, Miss Regan said, "Well, Mr. Ross was in, and he contacted all the help in here."

And most of the help, at that time in that office, was young people who were going to the University and who had graduated from the university—graduated and couldn't find a job, and we put 'em to work in there. And I said, "What did he want?"

And she said, "Well, he was primarily interested in their politics."

I had never thought of that; we'd never asked them. I said, "Well, what are their politics?"

And she said, "Well, he was kinda surprised most of 'em weren't old enough to vote."

But talking to Mr. Ross on the bridge of the river about three weeks afterwards, I said, "Well, how ya doin' on the new job?"

And he said, "Well, I've never been up there yet—they won't let me in till I get a bond."

But he was the one that went on; his name was Gilbert Ross—he had previously been a state bank examiner, and was a very strong Democrat. And in his career, of course, they went into these work projects, PWA and WPA and those things along there.

I've probably skipped one stage in this relief work, and that was the organization that handled the CCC camps, which came under our jurisdiction. The original man that came to Reno to start the CCC camps was an old-time U.S. Army colonel. And he arrived in Reno in a boxcar with his big dog, and the field equipment that colonels would have in war, and no place to stay. And he contacted me, and I didn't know what to do with him so I put him underneath the grandstand at the racetrack, with all his equipment and his help

was with him, and that was probably the start of the CCC camps in Nevada.

From there, of course, they got into the construction of the different camps, and our job was to supply the young people who went to the camps, and they came from this area and the other areas; in fact, one big group we sent out came directly from New York. We sent them out to down below Portola, and that was quite a shock to 'em after bein' off the streets of New York to wind up out in the forest out there.

CCC camps, of course, aid cleanup work in the forest and that type of work, and restoration—it was a very good thing. They got board and room and a dollar a day. And I believe it was one of the best projects the government ever had in this area. Besides keepin' those young people busy, they did constructive work, and it was healthy type of work. Lots of 'em are in Reno yet today; they'd sign up, they'd come to me and want to go out to the camps.

That was one of the good ones—one of the good projects. They established camps at Truckee, and Elko, out in Lamoille area, and then we had a camp down below Dayton, where the bridge crosses the river there, and a camp below Portola. And to my knowledge, they did good work, and we never heard any complaints about 'em at all.

Were you connected with the ones in southern Nevada that did the work on the state parks?

No, I don't recall what the situation was in Vegas at that time. Well, Director Creel of the Extension Service was in charge of all this relief work, simply because the federal government at that time didn't have any office at every state in the Union, except in the Agricultural Extension Service. So they put the directors of the Agricultural Extension

Service in charge of the relief work, the welfare. We didn't have any HEW at all—it was just an additional job for Mr. Creel. We did get—and it wasn't in CCC work—we got into some welfare at Tonopah.

Who was the colonel that you—?

I can't think of his name. He had a big dog, a great big dog, you know, not a St. Bernard, but a smooth-haired dog of some kind. And he had the Army camping equipment, you know, all that. That's what they sent him here in, with his crew, and as I said awhile ago, we had no place to put him and no money to pay him. He had his campin' outfit, so we set him up underneath the old wooden grandstand down at the fairgrounds. He got along all right there—oh, he got *along*, but not all right. But it was quite an adventure, you know; the Army men hadn't been doing much at that time.

One of the camps that always interested me very much, was the group that we set up out at Mohawk, California, which was located in Feather River Canyon below Portola and above Quincy. That entire camp was boys off the streets of New York, and Brooklyn; they had never been in the West before.

One of the things that happened, physically, in this thing—as they went through their physical examination which was conducted by the Army and Navy doctors (they sent 'em up from Sacramento), they would examine 'em. And whenever they found a boy with a bad tooth, primarily, they didn't fix the tooth because as they did their examining, they went to camp—they merely sent 'em down to a dentist, and the dentist pulled the tooth for the full sum of five dollars a tooth. And the dentist we were sendin' 'em to was a local man by the name of Dr. Rhodes. And one afternoon, about three o'clock, he called up and told us not to send any more boys down,

that his arm was sore from pullin' teeth. And he got five dollars for every tooth he pulled.

Another camp that we had was up north of Truckee, up in the mountains. That camp was primarily all local boys. They worked in the Forest Service. And of course, we had a very fine camp at Lamoille, Nevada; that was mainly Nevada boys and primarily most of 'em were from Reno, that went out to Lamoille and worked. And then we had another camp down the river below Dayton, which cleaned up the river and worked that area.

I think it was one of the best projects that the government ever had. These young boys were generally eighteen, nineteen, twenty, some of 'em as high as twenty-five years of age, and no work, couldn't find a job at home. Lots of 'em had to go out and find something to do, and this took care of it for a short time. Both the physical work and their health, and their mental attitude—and it was a very good thing.

What exactly were you doing with these camps?

To actually put it into perspective what we did, we'll take the camp at Topaz. Topaz, of course, is located between Minden and Gardnerville and Coleville. And just for instance, what we did—we would assign the boys to a camp, and for a particular instance, the forest supervisor, who worked very closely with these CCC camps, was Mr. Atcheson. And when we were assigning the boys, he wanted his son to go, and his son was one of the people we sent to that camp. And his name was Merle Atcheson, who afterwards turned out to be one of the officials of the local power company. I just put that in as the type of people we picked.

Our job was locating the people to go, the background, checkin' 'em out, registerin' 'em, and as I said before, the Army and Navy

provided the physical examinations and cleared them physically.

Did you have any contact with the federal officials, or regional-federal types?

Not in this particular angle, no. Our only contact was through the Forest Service, and originally establishin' the camps, and assignin' the boys. They applied through our office to go to the camps.

Vein [Vernon C.] Durkee was one of the people we sent to a camp. He had a job sellin' tickets at the Wigwam theatre downtown, and had a skin problem, and he wanted to go out to a camp. Of course, his father was state of Nevada highway engineer at that time. We sent him to Lamoille.

The Forest Service took care of that [work], and they were very well equipped to do it, and they needed the help, they could use them. They did some very fine work in the forest, cleanin' up. No, we didn't get into the actual operation of feeding or buying or selling, or building the camps— they did that in the Forest Service operation.

As I said before, Director Creel was the agricultural extension director for Nevada; he wasn't a welfare man at all, but found himself with this welfare problem. And as much as I'd worked in the Agricultural Extension Service, he knew me, and I was handling the welfare indirectly for Washoe County in there. And he just automatically took me on as a welfare man, and I knew very little about it. In fact, I quit, because I realized as time went on, with the change, and the political change, where you no longer did it on a hit and run basis, you had to know their religion and their politics and things like that.

One of the big projects we had at that time, we were given the job of furnishing all the men who rebuilt the Purdy highway,

which is U.S. 395 North now. The contractors who did that job, had to get their help from the offices of myself and a man by the name of Archie Cross who was then (let me see if I can find his title here). Archie Cross was a former railroad man, retired, and a staunch Democrat.

Most of the welfare at that time was handled by an agency called the Central Relief Committee, which was handled, as I said previously, by the county.

I also forgot to mention that in handling the relief with the Red Cross and the Salvation Army and ourselves, that the YWCA was very active and cooperated in helpin' us at that time. They were located in a basement of the city hall, and they took an active part in the welfare situation.

Inasmuch as we were assigned to supply the labor, all the men who were looking for jobs registered in our office, and that turned out to be quite a problem. The contract was let and the work started, after the men had filled out cards and given us their names and ages and addresses.

Very shortly after the work started, the federal government decided to pay a pension to the men of a certain age— I believe it was sixty-five years of age, or something. And to our surprise, here came back the same help that had signed up for us for work on the road of fifty-five and fifty-seven, wantin' their cards back, because they couldn't qualify for their pension. They'd underestimated their age at the time they were lookin for jobs, and now they would rather qualify for the pension, so we had quite a problem on our hands, getting all those cards out and tryin to determine what their age was. They kinda got caught in the squeeze on the thing.

As an unusual feature back in the thirties, there was a newspaper reporter in town by

the name of Carol Cross, who was with the national capers. He was aware of the fact that Barbara Woolworth [Hutton] was comin' to Reno, to get a divorce or get married—I don't recall which. And her lawyers were Woodburn and Thatcher, who had offices in the First National Bank on the corner of Second and Virginia Street. So Carol located himself in front of the bank, knowing who the lawyer was and makin' sure that he'd contact him for the national papers when she came to town.

And in the process, why, she came through on a train, went to Verdi and got off, got married or divorced—I don't recall which—and left town while Carol was still standing in front of the First National Bank building.

It's rambling, but apparently that's—, The relief program which was fairly miss and hit here, because we weren't qualified—the relief workers—when it changed from the local level to the federal level, which happened about November 1932, here, the money was sent us from Washington, but it had to be handled by the controller of the state of Nevada. And when we got the money and had to take it to the controller, I had told Mr. Creel that the state couldn't accept this type of money.

In my operation of the fairs, I'd found out that the state had no legal method of accepting federal funds. They could take state funds, State taxes, fines, but not federal funds. And he didn't think that I was correct, so we went to Carson with the money and talked to the State controller, who was Mr. [Edward C.] Peterson at that time. And he told us that he had no authority to receive federal funds of any kind. And here we had the federal money to run the welfare and no place to put it.

So we went in and talked to Governor [Fred] Balzar about our problem, and Governor Balzar convinced Mr. Peterson he should accept it as an off-record fund, which he actually wasn't responsible for, but take it. And he accepted the money, and then as we expended it, we were required to present receipts to Mr. Peterson for the money we spent, which we did. As we had a set limit of five thousand dollars—we could expend up to five thousand dollars—then we'd have to take the receipts, the payrolls and so forth and go to Carson and give them to Mr. Peterson, and he'd reimburse us. And that was the way the original federal funds were handled here at that time.

That's really interesting.

It was interesting to Mr. Creel, too. See, I had had a problem with the fair, runnin' the fair—state fair, in Fallon at that time—and had run into this problem that they couldn't accept federal funds. So I happened to know that this was the problem, and Mr. Creel wasn't aware of it till we got to Carson. And that was an actual situation. I think now, with the federal funds, there's no problem; they can accept 'em now.

You have not talked about your actual teaching at the University.

To put the teaching at the University into perspective, the University was in financial problems at that time in the thirties, and they were cutting down on their faculty and in their departments. In fact, it got down one time to where the College of Agriculture had just the one person as far as I know, it was the dean of the College of Agriculture.

But in '30 or '31, both myself and Ernest Brooks, whose folks had the Model Dairy here in Reno, were asked to teach on a part-time

basis. We never became professors, we were just merely instructors and had two or three classes each. I carried two classes most of the time, and three sometime, and they paid me forty dollars a month, and I think Ernest Brooks taught there and got about the same thing—around forty dollars a month.

It was an interestin' experience, and it was something you had to keep ahead of, because about that time, the vocational—high school vocational [education] was comin' into existence here, and a lot of the students you got had had high school vocational [education], so you had to prepare yourself into different levels. My courses were—one course was in "poultry production," and one in "turkey production."

And then for two or three years, I had a course in "land values," which was appraisals of the farmlands. And one of our very fine laboratory areas was the Rancho San Rafael. That was the ranch we used for the students to do the lab work on.

Mr. Herman who was the owner—"Doctor" Herman, I guess he was known as, wasn't he?"—"Doctor Herman," yeah, who was the owner of the ranch, was very cooperative and interested in the students and their work at the University.

For some reason or other, they dropped the course after three or four years; I didn't understand why. The interest in it was very, very good. I taught the kids how to appraise property, identify properties and so forth, but by that time, of course, the University was startin' to come back again.

I never understood exactly what happened to the College of Agriculture. It seemed like when they needed additional classes or additional money, in other sections of the school, why, they would drop things in the College of Agriculture and merely transfer the classes to other departments.

The College of Agriculture carried the rest of the University for a long time.

That's right, yes they did, they did. Well, they had that Experiment Station fund, the Hatch Act, you know, and of course the Experiment Station stayed pretty much within itself. They did conduct some open classes, with Dr. Vawter in veterinary science, which were very fine classes.

There was considerable conflict in the College of Agriculture at that time, and it went on for years between the dean of the College of Agriculture, the director of the Experiment Station, and the director of the Agricultural Extension Service. They were all operating as separate units, and it led to a lot of confusion.

In fact, one of the peculiarities of the thing was when we started to college, the agriculture college had a truck that the International Harvester Company gave to them. They only had one other car on the campus at that time, and it was always a continual hassle about who was gonna get to use the truck for whenever they wanted it—just small things that went on amongst the different people.

In later years, the Agriculture Advisory Committee, in which I was involved, we recommended that the three departments be combined under one head, and that one head not be anybody presently in the University—be brought from the outside—and that they dispose of the farm on South Virginia Street, which they had acquired through a political deal which was not too good for the University. The farm itself was a very poor farm and was indirectly dumped by some large land owners, because it had practically no water right, and the University couldn't do very much with it. The things we recommended got done, but the people who were on the committee didn't get reappointed to the committee.

Is that when they brought Hutchinson in then?

Yes, that's when Hutchinson came up. And it was peculiar—it was just different. Nothing against [S. B.] Doten; Doten was a very fine man, but he was there so many years that he assumed that the Experiment Station was part of his family.

Dean Stewart had come in followin' the first dean of the college—or I shouldn't say the first dean—the first dean of the College of Agriculture, I guess, was Gordon True as far as I know, who afterwards went to Davis with the University of California. Then Charlie Knight became dean, and he went to San Francisco later, and then he was followed by Dean Stewart. I believe Dean Stewart came from Utah—he was primarily an agronomist in his field.

Cecil Creel, who was director of the Agricultural Extension Service, I believe, was pretty much a Nevada man. He was the second director of the Agricultural Extension Service, the first one bein' Mr. [C. A.] Norcross. [In Jim Hulse's history], he's got his information pretty straight.

Incidentally, one of the students I had when I was teachin' at the University of Nevada was not a College of Agriculture student. He was a journalism student by the name of Robert Miller. Robert Miller came to the University from Pittsburgh, California to take journalism. And one semester when we were signin' up classes, he showed up in the College of Agriculture, to take a course in poultry. And it turned out, at his home in Pittsburgh, California, they had a few chickens, his father and mother and so forth, and he was kind of an ambitious person, as his future history will tell you, and he thought sometime in the future, he might want to write something on agriculture, so he came over to the College of Agriculture and took this class

in poultry. And he and I became very good friends by that, and he, of course, afterwards, became a world-famous correspondent through the World War [II]. I don't know just where he is now.

Last I heard of him, he was over in Hawaii fillin' in for somebody in the newspaper racket. He became quite a world-roamin' correspondent. He just went anywhere he wanted; he picked his place and went at their expense. He was one of the first men into Paris [during World War II], on the handlebars of a bicycle, and he got shot in the shoulder. Oh! he was also one of the first correspondents on that island out in the Pacific that we invaded—what in the heck was the name of it? When we took it from the Japs? Okinawa. And I don't think he got injured there again, but then he wanted to go to the atomic blast, the first one they had. And because of the places he'd been and things that'd happened to him, they wouldn't let him go. And he was pretty upset about that.

Let's go on with the relief situation. I did talk some about it, and there'll probably be some duplication.

Just briefly, I got involved in the relief situation, after bein' appointed the assistant probation officer in Washoe County. And about that time, the Depression was appearin' in the West. At first, it was a very small thing, it was an occasional person or something who needed their rent paid, or a few groceries or something like that, and we merely handled it through the county office over there, get the money, and give 'em the cash. But as time went on, it then became a bigger operation, and was located primarily in the three different places.

The start was in the basement of the old State Building, and from there, we moved to 15 East Second Street, which is part of the

First National Bank at the present time, in an office which was given to the relief board free of charge by George Wingfield. And that became too small, and during the summer of '32, we operated from the College of Agriculture at the University of Nevada—the college was closed down all that summer. By that time, of course, it had started taking on a statewide and national situation.

At first it was a welfare, strictly a welfare situation. You came and applied for help, and we gave you help usually, what we thought you had to have, groceries and wood and coal, till we checked your need. Then we checked your need, and you generally had to get two or three local people to sign for you on your card, and if you were in need, we took care of you. I kept on handling welfare till President Roosevelt was elected, and it was a short time after that, it became a relief problem all right, handled by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

We had some very, very fine projects out of that thing; I think I said once before, one of them was that deal on the quad at the University, where we took out every other tree. And all that cement rockwork that you see along here down at the bottom of the hill was done by those people. And the rockwork over there on University Terrace. And built swimming pools and ball parks. Idlewild Park was pretty much built. The park out there in southwest Reno that's there now, was one of those welfare projects too, Virginia Lake. Actually, Virginia Lake was never meant to be a park. It was a public works project built as a reservoir for the irrigation ditches; before, the irrigation ditches ran from the Truckee River right straight out into the farm area. But on this program, they used the area of Virginia Lake as a reservoir. Primarily, that's what it was built for, and then, of course, later became a city park.

One of the reasons I mentioned Mr. Schaffer and his program of keepin' people on welfare—while I was just the head of the local area here, I was very opposed to the federal government gettin' involved in relief work. I just didn't think it was the place for them. We knew what we were doin', we knew the people who came in, and we were able to find out. And part of my discussion with him that night was that Washington was just too far away to handle these things because even at that time, there was so much apparent racket in relief work; when it was still small, you were aware of the fact that it was going to be difficult to handle it from a distance.

The different angles that people use to get on the welfare—. I think I mentioned once before on the Purdy highway out here, when the men who signed up for that work didn't use the right age, and then got entrapped when the government put a pension plan into effect, that they had to come back and reapply, having previously incorrectly stated their age.

I think one of the problems that occurred to me in relief work—just so people will understand what'll happen in there— was a Greek woman who came to our office for help; she was gonna have a baby. And the county physician at that time was Dr. Bath, Dr. Clarence Bath. So we sent her to the county physician, and he okayed the thing that she was gonna have a baby, and we sent her to a home. You didn't have rest homes at that time, you just had a few women around town that would take these types of cases. And the woman took her into the home and fixed her all up and put her in bed, and we never heard any more about the case till about six weeks later, and I said to my secretary one day, "Whatever happened to that Greek woman that was gonna have the baby?"

And she said, "I don't know." She said, "I'll find out." So she called Dr. Bath, and Dr.

Bath had forgotten about the case, too. So he called the woman that was taking care of her, and she said, "Well, she's still here, she's in bed, she won't get out of bed—we've been takin' care of her."

So Dr. Bath went over and made an examination, and he came back and he said, "She's not going to have any baby. That's just a tumor." And she wouldn't get out of bed. We had to finally get the officials to get her out of bed and take her stuff out of the house. And I point this out because of rackets they were usin'—she was experienced. She'd been around the country and knew what she was doin'. People don't understand this relief work at all if they haven't been in it. It is a business.

I'm not sayin' that all the people who apply for welfare are not justified, but a certain percentage of 'em at *that* time, were pretty professional, and *today*, the percentage of these professionals in welfare is a lot bigger.

We had another actual case of a seventy-six-year-old woman who came into the office and applied for welfare. And in the conversation, of course, we asked her if she was married, and she said "No." And the girl who worked in our office as secretary sold tickets at the Wigwam theatre at night, and after the woman went out, she said, "Well, that woman's married." She said, "She has a young husband that's about twenty-six or twenty-seven years old, and every night they pander the streets downtown—he on one side, and her on the other. And on Saturday night, she comes to the Wigwam theatre in her fur coat, and they don't just buy regular tickets, they have a box seat and go to the show."

And so, the woman came back in a few days for help; I said, "Well, where's your husband? You're married. Send him in. I want to talk to him." And he came in and he turned out to be about twenty-five or twenty-six years old. And he told me the story. I said,

"How in the world did you happen to marry this woman?"

"Well," he said, "I wanted to go back to Kansas (or the Midwest somewhere) and see my family. So I went and bought a seventy-five-dollar car, married this woman, and put her in the back of the car and wrapped her up in blankets and pillows, and we went back to Iowa and had a family reunion, and it never cost a cent. Every place I went, this was my mother. She'd been away and gonna die, and she wanted to get home to see her family before she passed away." And he said, "We made the entire trip back there and all the way back and never spent a cent." That's welfare. (I can tell true stories all day long, but I'm not gonna, different ones and things that they do to you. The cryin' women and borrowed children.)

THE FEDERAL LAND BANK

The Depression, of course, when the banks closed, just previous the banks closed, caused considerable problem in the livestock and agricultural-farm part of the state, because they were practically all large borrowers from the banks. And there was no particular agency to refinance them, so it fell to the Federal Land Bank, which was located in Berkeley, California. And they naturally had a heavy load of refinancing and had to have appraisals on each application.

The farmers or livestock men—and not so much the livestock men in Nevada, because the Federal Land Bank had a maximum loaning capacity of \$50,000 at that time, which in most cases, wouldn't do much good to the large livestock operations, so the laws were primarily for smaller units of livestock and the ranches.

And they also had two types of loans. The Federal Land Bank loan, up to \$50,000; and

then they had another emergency-type loan, which had a maximum of \$7,500 on it, which was just quietly made to small operators, to keep them on the farm with their family, rather than have them leave the family and move to town and become welfare cases. You didn't tell 'em that, but that was the way you appraised on the \$7,500 deal.

Havin' been an agricultural extension agent, and taught in school, I was offered a job as an appraiser and went to work for the Land Bank in 1932. In that next four years, I appraised probably five hundred ranches, mostly in Nevada, some in the Susanville area, and some over in Woodland area, in California.

For the actual operations, we'll take a ranch in Winnemucca, which was a good-sized ranch; it had a \$325,000 bank loan on it when the banks foreclosed the loan. And the ranch, of course, was broke. You appraised on the basis of normal process of 1910 to 1914; that was your base, because, as unusual as it seems, that's the closest base the Land Bank could find, where there was no wars going on in the world, and other conditions that affected prices.

The owner of the ranch would apply to the Land Bank, then the application would come back to the appraiser, and you acted practically as a banker yourself; you had the appraisal and the application. This was a type of ranch where the bank had a loan on it, and had foreclosed on the people who had the loan, but turned it over—the bank—to another operator, who happened to be a sheep man in this case, on just strictly a note, that he would have the ranch. And there's a little subterfuge in there: he wasn't told he didn't own it, but he ran it just like he owned it, and the banks of course, through receivership, financed it. And, as strange as it seems, I appraised the ranch for \$15,000 for loan value,

with that heavy mortgage on it. And without mentioning any names, when we got down to the actual ownership of the ranch, the person who held the deed of ownership on that ranch wasn't the bank; it was the president of the bank, personally. He had the deed in his safe-deposit box!

In those appraisals, you contacted the bankers, merchants, to find out what was owed on the ranch, because if the loan was approved, then those who were listed as creditors would be paid in proportion to the total that they had. A good example—not on this particular ranch, but in Lovelock—when I went in there first to make an appraisal and contacted the local banker about the appraisals I had to make, he informed me that they didn't owe him any money then, which was all right.

However, I went across the street to the Lovelock Mercantile and talked to Mr. Roberts who was manager of Lovelock Mercantile. And of course, he had claims, or bills I guess, probably each of them one I had. And he very nicely gave them to me, because they didn't know till I got near the bottom, I said, "Well, when I was over talkin' to the banker over there, he told me that these people didn't owe him any money." And I said, "I was surprised because if you don't file your claim and the man gets the loan, you don't get paid."

And he said, "What did you say?"

And I told him.

He said, "Just a minute," and he went and called up the banker and told him what the situation was, and the banker invited me back. Before we got done, I had an office in the bank with a key to it, when he found out if he didn't list his claims, he wasn't gonna get paid.

It was interesting work, and of course, lots of these ranches at that time owed George Wingfield's banks, which were Reno National and so forth, and the Churchill County bank,

money. But in all the time that I was appraisin', I had never heard any of those people ever say anything nice about the Reno National Bank, or the Wingfield banks, even though the loans showed that the banks had carried them for four or five years, adding the interest that was due on the loans that they couldn't pay, and paying the tax of the property. They would have nothin' nice to say about the banker.

You take right here in this local area, when the Washoe County bank closed, some of the large owners in this area—which happen to be some of my wife's relatives, the Holcomb estate and the Wheeler estate—local people blamed those families indirectly for the fact that the banks closed, and they lost their money.

I guess one of the best ranches I ever appraised—in picking out ranches—was a large ranch, the Grass Valley ranch, north of Austin Nevada. It had been owned originally by the Saval brothers, as far as I know, and then they apparently had gotten into financial difficulty, and the Wingfield banks had it as a trust account. And they in turn, had sold it to a man by the name of George Watt. He was from Utah. I say that because, previous to he ownin' it, another George Watt of the same name, who was afterwards state surveyor for the state of Nevada, owned the ranch, and there was no relationship between the two.

The Land Bank had made a loan to Mr. George Watt of Utah, in which he had failed his payments, and the Land Bank had to repossess it, and have it fall to my appraisal work to make a recommendation on it. The Land Bank loans hadn't been paid for a few years, and the interest hadn't been paid, and the whole thing amounted to about \$25,000 on the ranch, which was later purchased from the Land Bank for about, \$20,000 to \$25,000, by a man by the name of Dick Magee. And when Dick Magee went to get the ranch, he

wanted the deed to the ranch, which he didn't get when he bought it from the Land Bank—the original deed—and he got that from Mr. Watt. But he had to pay Mr. Watt \$1,500 to get it—the deed, just a piece of paper.

It's a very fine ranch, and I think it's probably a lot better ranch today than when I appraised it, simply because at that time, it was away out in the country—there was no trucks. Livestock were not being trucked then, and to move their livestock, they had to generally trail it to Fallon, Nevada to get to a railroad to ship them.

Today, of course, that's all changed. The big trucks drive into the ranch, load up, and move out. And that ranch today is owned by Molly Flagg Magee Knudtsen.

The Land Bank itself was a very fine concern to work for. They never questioned your time that you worked. You were out there by yourself, and no boss, and they paid you the time that you turned in, and your automobile mileage.

Their head man was Mr. Ellis of Salt Lake City, for this district. At one of our meetings, when one of the appraisers asked about an expense account—I don't know whether the appraiser was a little conscious or not—Mr. Ellis came up with an answer that I've often thought on that occasion of usin' a few times in my life. He just told the appraiser, very simply, "When we hired you, we thought you were honest. When we don't think so, we'll fire you." And that was the answer to how you handle expense accounts. He was an appointee of—Ellis was an appointee of—Senator Smoot of Utah. A little politics in there.

I worked for them about three and a half years. By that time, conditions were returnin' somewhat to normal in the agriculture field—maybe not the rest of the world, but in there—and durin' the last year, year and

a half, I was supervisin' appraiser for the northern part of the state.

Havin' been caught up on my work, and not using temporary appraisers, they offered me the position of permanent appraiser in Nevada, and I turned it down, because I had to work for them in full, or get rid of my hatchery. And I decided to stay in my little field.

The Land Bank operated during those years out of Marysville, California; that was our headquarters, while the headquarters for the bank were still at Berkeley. They had these divisions and we had to check in at Marysville every so often, take some additional lessons.

One of the appraisers who worked for me, or with me, was from Red Bluff, California. He was a good deal older than I was, had been in livestock. One time in Marysville, they decided to call us in, and get us a short course on making maps, which were quite important in appraisal work. We went to Marysville, and were takin' this course on making maps, and the second day, one of the men from the main office walked in and saw this older man takin' the course, and they had a great reunion. And this man turned out to be a graduate of Stanford in engineering, who was quietly takin' the course and sayin' nothin'. The operators of the course were a little embarrassed.

However, this the same man, as a sideline, was a college pal of Herbert Hoover, later president of the United States. And Herbert Hoover, when this man was in college, was his laundry boy. Herbert Hoover had a laundry route in this building—picked up their laundry each week. His name was [Winn Lyon].

Was that typical of what Land Bank appraisers did?

They would occasionally have what I guess you'd call today, a clinic, and have us come to a different area and bring us up to date on their policies and on their prices and things like that—the prices of land and stock and things like that that you had to work on.

On the actual appraisal, you appraised their land. If they had any buildings, you didn't contact the insurance companies at all because, at that time, there was a tendency of some ranchers to burn buildings down to collect the insurance. And you just put a value on the buildings of a minimum value of what they might be worth. So they would have you in on that, and they'd have you in on land values. Also, people probably won't believe this but the appraising at that time for cows and calves, if you were in that cattle business, were around fifteen dollars a head for the cows with weaner calves on 'em.

I particularly remember an instance in Fallon where I was appraisin' some ranches—had some dairy cattle and hay down there, and Kent Company was a big buyer of hay down in there, at that time. So I went to Kent Company to find out how much hay was sellin' for, and they said, "Five dollars a ton for alfalfa hay, but don't bring any in, we're not buying." Dairy cattle, you could buy 'em for twenty dollars a head in there, but there was no buyers for them either.

So that was the types of things that we had to work, and as I said before, you based your market values and your land values on the—1910-1913 periods.

THE WESTERN HATCHERY AND THE NEVADA POULTRY PRODUCERS

What'll we talk about now? I figure you're gonna straighten all this out.

You were going to talk a little bit about the Western Hatchery.

In these Depression years, you did whatever work you could to make a living, and of course, things are going to lap over in this history. We bought the Western Hatchery, and I was in charge of relief work for Washoe County, was teaching at the University of Nevada, running the Nevada State Fair, and was secretary/treasure of the Nevada Poultry Producers.

There was a lot of people who were doing the same thing that I was—trying to make a living, you had to have more than one job. University paid me forty dollars a month; the probation office paid \$125 a month.

My wife and I purchased the Western Hatchery on a very Loose type of arrangement for \$5000—no money down, but a Promise to pay. No inventory, and no notes of any kind,

in 1929. As I said before, it was located about 200 feet west of the end of West Fifth Street in Reno, between Fifth Street and Vine Street, and was owned and operated at that time by a man by the name Angelo Scanavino.

He had, for years, had the Western Feed and Grain there, and was retiring, and wanted to move to California. So he sold his business, with nothing down and a half share of profits, with a promise that we'd pay for it. We kept the hatchery for about twenty-three years while we were doin' these other jobs and gettin' out of the Depression and raisin' a family.

It turned out to be a very good investment. At one time, we were hatching as high as 150,000 baby chicks a year, several thousand turkeys, hatching chukars and pheasants and partridge for the state of Nevada. But it was a type of business in the Depression years when people were staying at home, and taking care of things like dairy cattle and poultry, which was a tedious job. And as the people came out of the Depression, the market got pretty narrow. In fact, when the school board bought the site of the present Reno High School up

there, it involved one of our sales of 30,000 baby chicks a year. I told my wife at that time, “It looks like the hatchery business is gonna go.” But we did well with it, and we stayed there till 1953, ’54, and sold the property.

It was an ideal place to live; it was off the street, about three-and-a-half or four acres of ground; we had our own gardens, our own orchard, was quiet too.

It now is occupied by Pay’n’Pak—most of it’s occupied by Pay’n’Pak. We originally sold it to a party whose name I don’t recall at this time. He eventually sold it to Safeway Stores—I suppose they still own it probably and rent it to Pay’n’Pak. As far as I know, it was the only hatchery in western Nevada that hatched baby chicks as a business.

Durin’ the War years, it became quite a problem to handle it, because you couldn’t get any help. And the help you did get was the older people who were retired, and they wouldn’t stay. So we found ourselves sometimes workin’ sixteen-hour days, year ’round. There was no break in there. It was a good business.

What was a typical day at the hatchery like?]

Oh, a typical day at the hatchery. Well, you got up in the morning, and of course, we always kept about three or four hundred layin’ hens there. And you got up in the mornin’ and ordinarily, the first thing you did was check your incubators for the temperature and actually turned the eggs with a long crank from one end of the incubators. After you found out the incubators were runnin’ all right, why, you checked your chicken houses. If it was a warm day, you turned the chickens out. Then of course, you came back to your breakfast and did your actual work in the hatchery, which was a pretty detailed thing of checkin’ the eggs for fertility in there. And

then for a while, we only had one hatch a week. In the later years, I bought some more modern incubators, and we hatched twice a week. You’d book your orders for baby chicks in there, make your deliveries, clean up the hatchery, take care of your acreage that you had for other things besides the hatchery to go along with it. It was just physical work, and a lot of it. I would do it again, though, if I had to. I was my own boss.

But, of course, some of that time there, I was teachin’ at the University; some of the time I worked in the probation office. We didn’t have the Nevada Poultry Producers—it was an association at 338 Evans Avenue. We formed that in 1932, and sold it in 1949. I served as secretary/treasurer of it for the entire years it was in operation, from start to finish, and finally wound up selling it for the owners. We had a business for about a quarter of a million dollars a year in eggs there, and supplied Safeway Stores with practically all the eggs they used for about eighteen years. And besides handling eggs, we handled poultry, and during the holiday season, we handled turkeys—Christmas and Thanksgiving. I think we were probably the first one in the city of Reno that ever ran a full-page ad on a regular basis in the local papers. We ran full-page ads on the Silver White eggs, our top product.

It covered memberships from Washoe County, and Ormsby County, and Douglas County, Lyon County, and Churchill County, and at one time, some membership from Pershing County. It was a real co-op, owned by the members. As they shipped their eggs in to the co-op, there was a percentage taken off each dozen to finance the operation of the business.

I may ask you some questions about that later, about the problems of running a co-op and about the final break-up of the whole thing.

Well, I can tell you about the break-up of the thing very easily. I said before, in the Depression years, people raised poultry and had chickens and stayed at home. As World War II came on, and they got more prosperous; they dropped the poultry end of it which was too confining. And we got down to a point where we had very few local eggs, but we were practically supporting the California Poultry Producers to run our business. The co-op people looked it over and decided there just wasn't a need for it any more, and there weren't the people in the poultry business to keep it goin'. So we just closed it down and sold it out. Safeway felt very bad we were their main source of eggs.

We had our problems, yes. The first seven years we were in business, we lost \$37,500. Before we got straightened around.

We financed it through the First National Bank and the Federal Co-op Bank of Berkeley, California. It turned out to be very profitable for the people that handled it because the building we bought at 338 Evans Avenue cost us \$2,000 for the land and \$7,000 for the building in 1930, and we sold it in 1948, the building and land for \$25,000. And of course, this bein' a co-op, the members all shared in that sale price.

In 1930, a group of poultry people, includin' myself who was owner of the Western Hatchery, decided to organize a cooperative marketing association for the poultrymen in western Nevada. This came about because there was no standard price for eggs to the poultry producers and no standing market.

We started with nothing. Our first manager was a former county agent of Humboldt County, Paul Maloney. He served a short time, then he was followed by Roger Teglia, who served seven years. And he was followed by Art Champagne, who served

about another seven years. And the last manager we had was a man by the name of Glen Guinan.

As I said before, we started down on Sage Street in Reno, Nevada—ran there a short time, and then bought property at 338 Evans Avenue in Reno, for which we paid a sum total of approximately \$7,000 for the lot and building.

The president of the Nevada Poultry was a man by the name of A. F. Scanavino, who was a semi-retired person and had had a feed business here for years.

The actual co-op, to belong to it, you had to be a poultry producer, and sell your eggs into the association. We had trucks that went around and picked up the eggs from the producers. And you'd pay a percentage of your market price per dozen for the services. This percentage we took off the eggs was kept in the organization to operate it and never became your money until the association was dissolved.

We hired a CPA to audit our books and provide us with an audit each year. The reason I mention that is because for several years, the deductions we made from the producers was just set aside in the association, and we'd never report it on income tax, because it belonged to the producers and was eventually paid back.

However, one day one of the Internal Revenue men— auditors—came and visited the association and decided that that withholding we had made was subject to tax like the rest of our revenue. And his argument was that the Nevada Poultry Producers was a person, a thing. It had a name; it wrote checks. He and I had quite a discussion. And I opposed his interpretation, and told him we always made honest returns and had the CPA audit our books. And we naturally felt we were in the clear. But with the CPAs, I suddenly found out they had very little responsibility.

They didn't assume any responsibility; they just worked for you and made the audit. But when it came down to responsibility, they didn't assume any.

The final outcome of it was that I agreed—I say *I*—I represented the Nevada Poultry—that we would pay the tax under protest. As it turned out, we didn't have much option. He said, "Well, you can either pay the tax under protest, or we'll revalue your operations and make the whole thing subject to tax.

We had a financial problem along about that same time, as we had to borrow considerable money from the banks to handle our storage of eggs. We stored eggs—started in March and generally ran through May. If we had a heavy storage, it took on quite a capital. We were operating through the local banks with no problem, when the Bank for Cooperatives of Berkeley was formed by the federal government to finance coops. The directors wanted to do business through that bank because of the low interest rate. Myself and Mr. Scanavino opposed that change in our operation from the local bank.

As time went on, for some reason or other, the Berkeley Bank for Co-ops decided they were no longer interested in financing Nevada Poultry Producers, Inc. However, they made us a small offer of \$5,000 advance to our operation. And we had to go back to the local banks and talk to them, whom we'd left. And it was quite a job to convince them that they should come back in the picture and finance the Nevada Poultry Producers. But the First National Bank of Nevada finally decided that they would refinance it like we had before, and they carried us through there. Sometimes we had to borrow as high as seventy-five to one hundred thousand dollars a year for a short period to finance storage of eggs. And as a sideline we handled turkeys, too—dressed turkeys. And to finance those two operations.

We operated from 1930 to 1948, and then we decided to discontinue because of two reasons. During the Depression years and the War years, people were in the poultry business, which was a tedious business; you had to be home all the time to take care of it. And the other reason was that with such a drop in local egg production, we were buying large volumes of eggs from the California Poultry Producers at Sacramento to serve our customers.

One of our biggest customers during the eighteen years we were in operation was the Safeway Stores. We didn't provide them with the hundred percent of their eggs during that time, but we figured that ninety, ninety-five percent of their eggs came from us. And they were quite upset when we went out of business.

After we closed it out and sold the property, we refunded the cash on hand and the profit to the members who had financed the thing during the years.

Did you have any particular problems with getting the people to give you all their eggs, or did they sell on the side for a little higher price, or something like that?

Some of our members who had other customers before we started, or who had—especially in the Reno area—customers who came and bought eggs right at their place—buy a dozen or something like that. And these people continued to serve those accounts. If it was a case account, why, they served it. And if it was just a dozen, or people, drop-in trade, they served that, too.

One of the things we did in those years, we found out, we set the price for eggs in western Nevada. And when we started in, we didn't know how to determine the price of eggs. As we went along, we found out that the market price was

established in San Francisco. At that time it was established by five older men who met once a day in the morning. They had no eggs, no poultry, were not poultrymen, but they met in a little office in San Francisco. They bought and sold a case of eggs or two amongst themselves, and that established the price that we had for eggs.

And because of establishing that price, several of the poultry producers in the Reno area who didn't belong to the association would come by our plant every day to find out what they should get for eggs. They weren't actually members, but they were good supporters, and they kept their price up to where it should be.

It was interesting, when you think of the people who were settin' the price—had no association with poultry in any way, but they agreed amongst themselves—"I'll buy a case of these eggs, and you buy a case of these eggs, and this is the price." Arid that's the way it was set. I suppose it's still set that way today, probably.

It'd be interestin', this—Safeway operation—while we serviced all their stores in the Reno area, we practically had no contact with the store managers. We were authorized by their main office in Sacramento to keep our inventory in their stores up. And the manager of the store was not aware of what the eggs would cost at all. The general manager in Sacramento, who bought the eggs, he knew what the price was, and he set the retail price for the manager. So the manager had nothin' to do with the local retail price on eggs, which was interesting to us.

I was just wondering if there was anything you're especially proud of in that co-op movement. I think you have reason to be.

Well, I think one of the things that—it's hard to believe it happened—we put out a

special egg we called a "Silver White" egg. And we sold it at a dollar a dozen. Now this was right in the Depression years. And here was a first-class, top egg; and even though people were in the Depression and very cautious about what they'd buy, we were never in our eighteen years, able to produce enough of that type of egg. We were short at all times—even at a dollar a dozen, when eggs would sell around thirty, thirty-five cents. It always interested us—if we could get to a store with those eggs, they were out right practically before you got 'em there.

Did you sell to manufacturing plants, bakeries, egg driers?

No. You didn't have that at that time. There was practically no eggs dried at that time. There wasn't enough eggs, I guess; there was nobody around here. No, our trade was the stores and the army, and the marines at Hawthorne and the big mining companies in the Lovelock, Winnemucca, Tonopah areas—we shipped to them.

How did you manage to divide your time between the Nevada Poultry Producers and the Western Hatchery?

Well, it was [a very busy operation] at the last. You see, before World War II started (on the Western Hatchery, I think I told you) at that time there was no income tax. Unless you made over \$5,000, you didn't have to file income tax. Mr. Scanavino was a wealthy man, and he didn't want to file the income tax. I was just makin' a living, so when we got up to about a hundred days, we generally had about \$5,000 each, and we'd shut down for the year.

When the war years started, after I had bought Mr. Scanavino out (he had left here entirely; he'd gone to California), then the

Hatchery ran practically twelve months of the year. And it didn't matter how tired you got; you just kept workin', because you couldn't get any help that was dependable, and that was also the case at Nevada Poultry Producers.

Actually, Nevada Poultry, durin' the war years, while we financed it, the help practically owned it, because you didn't say to the help—if they should leave, you couldn't replace 'em. You went into the business that you owned with your membership, but you were pretty cautious about your help, and what you said to them.

I think that the main thing that happened to us there was probably being financed, because we started with nothing. Before we got done, we were runnin' the business sometimes up at a half a million dollars a year. And we were being financed by the local banks. Then the government in the Roosevelt administration formed this farm cooperative—Berkeley Bank for Co-ops. And they were very anxious to handle our business, because they were a co-op with bank—we were a co-op. But for some reason, which I always thought was political, they suddenly decided that they were not interested in financin' Nevada Poultry Producers any more.

As the Berkeley Bank came into existence, my boss, who was Cecil Creel, called me on the phone one day and said that there was a man comin' from Washington to hire help for a co-op bank that they were gonna form at Berkeley, and did I know of anybody that they might contact? And well, I said yes I did. I suggested a young person by the name of Carroll Heffernan, who was with the local banks here at that time. The man hired him, and Carroll went to Berkeley and worked with them for years and became one of their head men.

But somewhere along the line when we had a little financial difficulty—not of our

own makin'; we don't know why (maybe some politics involved)—they suddenly decided that we couldn't run the business and made us just a token offer of \$5,000, which was just a nice way of sayin', "We're not interested."

Another additional thing that happened between two government agencies, the Berkeley Bank for Co-ops and the Internal Revenue, was over the tax situation that I mentioned previously, where the Internal Revenue said, "You have to pay tax on this withholding that you're makin'." And the Berkeley Bank for Co-ops said, "You don't have to pay it."

And finally one of the members one night said, "Well, just have the Berkeley Bank for Co-ops write and tell us we don't have to pay that!"

And they would never do it. They would talk on the phone—they'd talk to you about it, but they never would put it in writing and sign a letter that they were opposed to the Internal Revenue tryin' to collect that tax. So as I said previously, we paid it under protest, which was just a gesture. We just kept on payin' it. That was probably one of our first ventures back in those days of two government agencies opposin' one another—two different sides of the same question.

FAIRS, RODEO, AND RACES

ORIGINS OF THE STATE FAIR: THE FALLON YEARS

In 1927, '26 or '27, the Washoe County Farm Bureau decided to put on a potato-apple show, and it was held in the old World War I army barracks in back of Lincoln Hall at the University of Nevada. It was a free admission show, financed by local people, and most of the prizes were provided by the local merchants, who sold equipment, like plows, and things like that, to the farmers, and they provided the prize.

The area, at that time, was a heavy potato producing area. The exhibits were probably about ninety percent potatoes, but different grades and shapes and size and so forth, and some apples. Lyon County also participated to a small part in the show itself. Besides bein' a miniature type of fair, it became the meeting place of alumni who came to Reno for the Homecoming football games.

The potato-and-apple show itself, I believe started one year after the University of Nevada Homecoming parade, which was to be held

on the Homecoming Day football game. So between the potato-and-apple show and the Homecoming parade, and the alumni usin' it as a kind of a reception center, it drew a good crowd, and of course, it was also free—that helped.

But the main beneficiaries of it, indirectly, was the Aggie Club, who put on their annual Aggie Club dance, at that particular time. And it became so popular—such a moneymaker for the Aggie Club itself—that the student body eventually bought it from the Aggie Club for a certain amount of cash, which financed the 4-H clubs' judging teams, that participated in the 4-H Club Exposition at Portland, Oregon. I mentioned that because that was apparently my introduction as a fair operation man—that potato-and-apple show.

Accordin' to records, as far as I can tell, apparently the first attempt to hold a state fair in Washoe County was held in 1885. The locations of this first attempt to have a fair, which was mainly a race meeting, was located about where Cazazza Drive, at the present day, joins South Virginia Street (U.S. 395).

This attempt at a fair only lasted 1885 and 1886. In 1887, the state and the county and the people purchased the present location of the state fairgrounds, which is north of Ninth Street in Reno, west of Sutro Street, and east of what is now Wells Avenue, but at that time the price was apparently \$14,000 for the eighty acres, from a Mr. Bradley and (let's see here) and a man named Russell that owned the eighty acres.

Is that the same Russell and Bradley from Elko County?

It doesn't show that, it doesn't show who the Mr. Bradley and Mr. Russell was. There was an additional purchase with it, apparently some buildings and so forth, of about \$7,000 at that time.

The property then was turned over to the state of Nevada and was run from 1867 till 1913 by the State Agriculture Society. Fairs were held there, and race meets during most of those years.

In 1913, the legislature awarded the state fair to Fallon, Nevada. And that was in a political deal, which has been mentioned numerous times, where Washoe County had a one-year divorce law, and they wanted a six-months divorce law, and Fallon had wanted the state fair. And they got together, and Fallon had the deciding votes, so the legislature awarded the State fair to Fallon in 1913. There's no record of a fair in 1914. In 1915, accordin' to records, the first fair was held at Fallon, and they had no building but they constructed a temporary building out of alfalfa and called it an "Alfalfa Palace."

There's nothin' in the records to support this next statement, but, from general conversation with people who were in the legislature at that time years ago, the legislative act transferrin' the fair from Reno to Fallon

was supposed to be just for a two-year period. However, the bill that transferred it has never been located and the fair was held at Fallon from 1915 until 1950, except on occasional war years—there was no fair held.

The fair itself, being moved to Fallon, became a political situation, which was usual at that time. For instance, the present state penitentiary was originally all set to be built where the Reno state Highway Department license bureau is today. For years and years, that ground had a fence around it, about three feet high; land was given to different state areas for political purposes, the same as Sparks was given the state asylum, which is now called the state hospital—at that time it was "asylum." And [Caliente] was given the girls' school as a political award. And the boys' youth correctional center at Elko was awarded to Elko.

The people in those areas who got these types of political pork-barrel gifts, I guess you would call 'em, just assumed that they were theirs and given to them for political rewards. This was very prominent thinking in Fallon area, with the state fair. The people just thought that the fair was put in Fallon for their particular purposes, and any money that was spent on the fair—appropriated—was to be spent in their area. They didn't actually take too much interest in the fair itself, other than the local money it might bring in from the state appropriation.

I became connected with the state fair in Fallon, in 1929, through a political hassle where the state Agricultural Society had appointed a local person in Fallon to run the fair for 1929, and for some reason or other, the state Farm Bureau became interested in that appointment and was very unhappy with it. So they went to the governor and complained about the person put in charge. The Agricultural Society had appointed this

man, so of course, they wouldn't cancel the appointment. My appointment in 1929 was made by the governor—the Farm Bureau had no authority to appoint anybody—so I became the manager of the fair premium lists, and the premium interests and the livestock entries. And that portion of the fair, the previous man who'd been appointed by the State Agricultural Society was in charge of all the money—gate receipts—and the entertainment part of the fair.

It's hard to believe the animosity that was in the air at that time between Washoe County and Churchill County. I went down as manager appointed to run the fair, by the governor, and my reception wasn't very cordial, because they had already appointed somebody else. So I had to start from quite a handicap on that fair.

This time, they had a fair building down there. The grounds were so small, in the neighborhood of four, four-and-a-half acres, you couldn't put on any large fair of any kind, and the appropriation was only \$5,000 from the state to run the fair. But we did the best we could. I believe that first fair, our attendance was less than a thousand people, and between six and seven hundred of them were political passes, even though it was only a fifty-cent admissions for the fair.

After the fair was over, myself, the president of the Fair Board (who was Tom Dolf at that time), weren't able to find the manager the society had appointed. He had collected the admissions and was no longer around. So we met and met and met for months, to try and figure out some way to pay the bills. I would go down to Fallon every month or two to meet with them. They had the office uptown in the old Williams building, which was right on Maine Street. And [on] the table, there was bills all stacked up on it—no money. I couldn't get my salary,

so I eventually, about Thanksgiving time, I made 'em an offer to run the next year's fair, get my salary out of the two fairs, for the next year. Of course, they accepted that. That's how I got into the fair business.

That was a really brave offer.

Well, where else could you turn? They had no money and—.

How did you get the appointment from Governor Balzar? Did he just know you?

Yes, as a Washoe County Agricultural Extension Agent. The Nevada Farm Bureau recommended me. I knew Balzar; he and I became personal friends, because later on in life, when he was still governor and I was handling the federal welfare in Washoe County, we were acquainted on a first-name basis. Lots of the people that I refused to give welfare to would go to the governor in Carson and plead with the governor, and we would talk back and forth. (And then, gettin' off the subject of the fair—all our original federal relief money came through the state of Nevada, was on deposit with the—state controller—at the governor's request. The state itself could not legally accept that money. I think I've told you that once before. But he got the state controller to accept it, and disburse it as a courtesy.)

Then from there on, I ran the fairs to and including 1947 at Fallon. You had considerable difficulty because of the minimal reaction with the people in Fallon. I don't mean *all* the people, I mean the more prominent people in politics, who had this attitude of "it's a pork-barrel deal, and we won't do much about it."

It might be interesting how I handled the passes of the first year or the second year. Well, around seven hundred of 'em were

political passes, and we didn't make any great change, we just didn't send any passes out the second year. We wrote each one of those people who had the pass in 1929, a nice letter complimenting them on attendin' the fair the year before and hopin' they would attend the fair in 1930, and we had discontinued the method of sending out passes for the 1930 fair. They would merely report to a table—we'd have a table with a secretary at the front gate—and give the secretary their name and they would get their pass for that fair. And you know how many people showed up at that table to get a pass? None.

Why?

It was only fifty cents for the fair.

They figured they were looking too cheap to do that?

I think so. We separated it. Put the secretary over to the side, you see. "Passes only," We gave out a few passes, but not to those people.

The fairs, as I have said here, from that time we did the best we could with 'em. It's not too good to criticize Fallon too much, but it was just a condition at that time, that the fair itself had to be on a very limited budget, and there was only one place in the town of Fallon where people could come to the fair and go into a restaurant and eat and take their children. The rest of 'em were bars and that types of casino. So people comin' to the fair from out of town had to come down that same day and leave the same day. And on top of that, the sleepin' accommodations were very limited in Fallon, and by the time you got the regular exhibitors there for the fair, they had occupied practically all the motel and hotel rooms in the area. That became a problem also.

And then the second year, I convinced the Society to gamble on building a rodeo arena to go with the fair, which was a pretty small situation, but I believe it cost the sum of \$1,700 to build that seating; that arrangement can seat about 700 or 800 people. The board was very skeptical, 'cause they were all conservative people, and spendin' that kind of money, but it more than paid out—we had no problem with the rodeo. But the problem with the rodeo became political. The people who were interested in the rodeo didn't think that they should have to go to the fair to see the rodeo, and there was no reason for the rodeo to be there if there wasn't a fair. So every year, we would have that hassle with the local political people—the rodeo people—about the fair and the rodeo, and why couldn't they go to the rodeo and not go to the fair? And we finally worked out a compromise, where they gave us twenty-five cents on every ticket they sold at the rodeo, whether they went through the fair or not, they didn't have to go through. But that never, never finished as long as I ran the fair. Every year you'd have the same thing—they didn't want any fair, they just wanted the rodeo—why should they have to pay to go to the fair, when they didn't want to go to it?

Most of those years, Tom Dolf of Fallon was president. I believe in the first years of 1929, '30, and '31, Carl Dodge Sr. was president. Later years, Carl Dodge Jr. was president. And then followin' him was George Ernst served as president. They always wanted a *big* fair. And every year the Society would tell them the same thing: "Well, you put up the money." We only had \$5,000 at that time from the state legislative appropriation for the fair, and the Churchill County used to appropriate \$2,500. And we had the exhibit-space money, and the gate admission to run the fair on. But they wanted a big fair, the figure they kept

wanting was \$25,000—back in the thirties and forties. And our answer was always the same, “You get the \$25,000; we’ll run a \$25,000 fair.”

So after they changed managers and when I left there in 1947, my last year, in 1948 and ’49, they ran a fair somewhat similar to the ones we had been running all those years, and then 1950, they went *big*. They brought in a Hollywood show, and it cost ’em \$25,000. And [they] had a fair, and nothin’ happened till one day in November, some man was comin’ back from the Lake—his girl had been up to the Lake, she was a 4-H club member, and as they came through Carson, she mentioned she’d never received her premium award from the state fair in September. For some reason or other, the man said, “Well, we’ll just stop and see the governor.” So they went and saw the governor. And he got interested in the thing, and started an investigation, and the fair was broke. They didn’t have any money, and they had paid nobody, including the press, who were very silent. They hadn’t got their money either, but they hadn’t said nothing about the fair bein’ defunct.

So then we started the meetings to get ready to raise money to pay the bills, and the people in Fallon—or the more prominent people—asked for time to raise the money locally to pay off the bills. And we granted them that time, and they couldn’t raise any money to pay the bills off, so we talked to the state officials and they suggested we well the property. (That’s the state Agricultural Society—I’ll just say “we.”) It was owned by the state and was sold to Churchill County for the amount of the bills, which were about \$11,000 in 1950.

During that time, the Agricultural Society was also operating the previous fairgrounds in Reno. It had become pretty much of a racetrack, and it was run by the Silver State Jockey Club for trainin’ racehorses. And there

were several important horse races held here. In fact, they were held here till about 1931 or ’32. California had a law against horse racing, and the man running the races here, William Kyne, he tried to get legislation in California to allow horse racing. The first time the legislature put it on the ballot, the people voted it down on horse racin’. As horse racing stands in California today, the people have never voted on horse racin’ in California as far as I know. All the fairs are run under a bill which was passed by the California legislature “to improve the breeding of horses” in California, with a promise by the race horse people that a good portion of the money from the racetrack betting would go into the junior colleges and the state fair. The state fair in California was having financial problems, and so the people in California voted favorably on that bill.

However, that’s not unusual. With gaming in Nevada, the people in Nevada have never voted on gaming, except through the legislature. And there was a period in the thirties and forties when, if the people had voted on gaming in Nevada, it wouldn’t have been here. So, they’ve got it tied to the school systems now and so forth.

In fact, when you go to the state fair meetings in California today, you’re competing with the junior colleges and the state fair for the money. You’ll find—particularly one man I remember because he was president of the University of Nevada, President Love—attended the state fair meetings in California lobbying for money, just like the state fair manager was lobbying for money, to run the junior colleges on. (That’s a little off the subject, but it’s still what the situation is, I guess.)

In 1948, Governor Vail Pittman appointed me to the state Agricultural Society, and I was reappointed by Governor Charlie

Russell, in May of 1956. Durin' those years, of course, from 1951-52, there was no state fair anywhere. I had charge of the grounds to represent the state Agricultural Society, and had to have somebody in charge because the insurance people required it.

How about going back now to the Fallon years and talk about your contacts with the various exhibitors.

I'll give you a good example of goin' back to the Fallon fair—state fair in Fallon—I don't recall just what fair it was, but this is on the humorous side. Somewhere along in there, Maytag decided to send a little Jewish boy from New York, about twenty-two years old, out to the Nevada state fair in Fallon. He had never been out of New York. He had no more idea where Fallon was! And he got there late, and we didn't have any exhibit space left, and I found a little platform about three feet wide and about ten feet long, open. And he didn't have any money, he needed some place to sleep. And he was selling Maytag washers. I fixed him up, and I never saw him again till the fair was over.

When the fair was over, I went and talked to him. And this happened to be the year that Maytag washers put a gasoline engine on those washing machines, instead of doing it by hand. And he sold so many washing machines in Fallon, and he didn't have any time to bother me, and he thought Fallon, Nevada was the greatest place in the world! I think he sold about every woman in Churchill County a Maytag washer with a gasoline engine on it!

I never saw him again or since. But the way he started out, you know, winding up here from New York, and no money and no exhibit space, knew nobody—and the way it turned out when the fair was over.

The particular exhibits that you were talking about, yes, we had the regular farm

exhibits of farm crops and vegetables. Fallon was quite a vegetable area at that time. And I think we got the best exhibit of everything in that area, because, the fair being close there, the different ones that were gonna make entries would come in and take a look at what their neighbor had entered, and then they would go home and try to get something better.

Mr. dine, L. E. dine, was the county agricultural extension agent down there, and he was in charge of that particular part of the exhibits. And being quite a politician and wanting to make friends with everybody, you would look at him, and about half the time, he was takin' some exhibits out and putting somethin' else in, because somebody had brought him in something that was bigger or better in the deal.

The counties had booths there—primarily Washoe County, Douglas County, Lyon County, and of course, Churchill with the biggest exhibit, and Pershing County, and Elko.

Elko was a little reluctant to come in because it happened at that time that they had a fair out in Elko County, in which the dates conflicted to a certain point. And at that time, Elko used to get a \$2,500 appropriation each year for the Elko County Livestock Show, and we were after a \$7,500 appropriation at the same time. And Elko always liked to run theirs over Labor Day, and we did too, so we compromised, and they agreed to finally send an exhibit in and took part later on in the fair. But because of dissatisfaction on the Elko board with the appropriation they were gettin' from the state and certain politics that they had to stand by to get their \$2,500, Elko County themselves, asked that their appropriation be discontinued. And they appointed their own fair board to run the Elko fair.

But the actual exhibits themselves at Fallon, were good. As I said before, the accommodations were limited for people and entries, too.

And on the humorous side again, one year in the honey exhibit, Al Reed was the extension agent at Lovelock, and they had a very fine honey exhibit. And his brother, Ed Reed, was the county extension agent of Washoe County, and they had a very fine honey exhibit. And the judge in the honey exhibit was George Schweiss. And he started judging the honey early one morning—liquid honeys, and the combed honey—and that evening, at six o'clock, he was still walking around with two jars of honey in his hand, tryin' to figure out which one was the best. And it turned out that Ed Reed, I think, forgot to bring his liquid-honey exhibit. His brother, Al, gave him part of his honey exhibit, and the judge was tryin' to determine which jar of honey was the best honey at that time. They finally confessed it was the same honey from Lovelock.

Well, you talked about the political problems out there, but you must have overcome that in getting the support of the local people out there, because, if the political problem hadn't finally evaporated, you wouldn't have had any fair there.

Well, to be frank with you, I tried to get out of runnin' that fair for ten years. I'd just had enough of it, and while you didn't have any resentment from the normal, regular population of Churchill County, you still had it from the political persons, particularly from Senator Ralph Lattin. Being a politician, he couldn't understand why—or he didn't want to understand why—the Nevada state fair had to have a state fair manager from Washoe County, rather than Churchill County, and that kept the thing alive.

One day, Governor Vail Pittman practically had the police take him out of his office because he was well, a little out of line.

In fact, at one time in that period, they even ran ads in the papers over the state for a fair manager, because I did want to get out. And young Carl Dodge happened to be—Carl Dodge Jr., young Carl Dodge—happened to be president that year. And I was gonna stay out of it, except—there's way back in my story, as I've told you about, was a man named Bill Moffat who was responsible for me goin' to college. He was on the state fair board. And he finally sent his man down to a meeting in Fallon, Mr. [Charles A.] Brown, who was his office secretary, to ask me to stay on for him. They were havin' such a terrible time on things, so I stayed on at that particular time, and for a few years later, but that accounts for my stayin' there. And of course, young Carl Dodge, I wouldn't've abandoned him either. The job only paid \$500 a year total—you stood your own expenses, and I'd handle it in my hatchery business, and other business, generally spend about two weeks down there, board and room, and other expenses, mileage, all came out of the whole thing.

And a lot more than \$500 worth of headaches.

Oh boy! A person shouldn't be critical of the state fair that was held in Fallon from 1915 till 1950, other than it was just the actual conditions that existed. Churchill County and that area with the state fair in Fallon, regardless of how you handled the fair, or how you advertised it, or what event you had, you couldn't draw over 7,500 people for three or four days—it just wasn't there. Plus, the road conditions and the room accommodations and the meal accommodations—no place for the children to eat—it was just a poor political move, as far as I can guess.

I had the feeling from the people that I've interviewed from Fallon that they were really proud of their fair and their own participation in it, and that you had a considerable amount to do with their pride in the fair.

They were proud of their fair. The Agricultural Society, in those years, regardless of everything else that went on, gave me a thousand percent support in there. They were very satisfied as far as I ever knew, never had any complaints of any kind from my activities with the fairs, how it was handled. But the resentment came, not because of a person by the name of Thornton, but because he didn't live in Churchill County and run the state fair down there.

There was a poor man down there that had a ranch by the name of Ed Thornton—no relative—and because I lived in Reno and wasn't available to phone and his name was in the phone book, he got phone calls year 'round on the fair. Each year he would come to the fair, he and I would have a talk. And he'd say, "Well, so-and-so woke me up at midnight the other night and wanted to know about that poultry entry," you know, or "the sheep entry."

And, it's just one of those things that can happen to anybody in that line. And I have no prejudice against anybody, I had nothin' against Ralph Lattin—he was a politician. He was a—"my folk;" they were all his "folk" in there, and gettin' votes.

The 4-H kids, of course, both there and here, practically had their run of the show. I always thought that they were the big thing about a fair because of growin' up in the agricultural areas in the fair, and they're young, and never caused any troubles. Anything that we could give to them, we gave within the money, both in the 4-H and the high school vocational department—Future Farmers of America.

But there, the people runnin' those two events had some little unhappiness because they were such an important part of the fair, and we just didn't have the money to put all we should into that particular part. I knew that, and they did too. And they would like to do this and that, and I would too, but with a limited finance, you just couldn't do it, in their situation.

You know, I still see kids who was at the fair, you know, and the folks—they were proud of their fair. Probably ninety percent of the people that you talk about, never knew any of 'em to start with, except by name; you know, you don't particularly see those people. And a lot of them grown up now. I can still remember the name maybe. And I remember the fairs that were held there.

One of the big items of the Nevada state fair in Fallon when I took over, besides the complimentary passes which I previously mentioned, was what they called a "family ticket." They had been sellin' the family tickets for I don't know how many years in Fallon. And if you bought a family ticket—me being a neophyte in the fair business, thought that meant a family man, wife and children. But the first year I ran it—the fair—I found out a "family" had very few limitations, with aunts and uncles and friends, and the tickets were negotiable so you could just pass them around. And we immediately got rid of that the second year. They sold for two dollars a ticket for the whole fair. That was the cost of the ticket. It was really a bargain!

It seems peculiar at this time to mention, but about the time I took charge of the fair in the late twenties and early thirties, radio was just coming into operation. The present station, which is the Reno KOH, which was owned by the *Sacramento Bee* at that time, was pretty heavy on agriculture broadcasting in California. So they came to the fair at

Fallon with their broadcasters and their microphones, and they had quite a time. Most of the people in the Fallon area were scared of the microphones. They didn't know what this machine was; they couldn't get 'em to talk on it. They'd see the broadcaster coming, and they'd get away from him! And then, when they finally got them fairly well used to that, they jumped to a remote-control radio, where they stood off in a corner holdin' a switch or somethin', and the radio's way off there. And that *did* really upset the people who had just become aware that maybe it wasn't a trap that they were talkin' to, and this remote control was somethin' else.

Well, the second year they had remote-control there, the remote-control radio people ran into a problem. Every time they turned on the radio in the remote-control, they'd get nothin' but buzzes; it just wouldn't work. And they couldn't figure out what was wrong. Well, it happened about that time in our food concession, the women had found an electric fly killer to take care of the fly problem, instead of the fly paper. And about the third day every time a fly'd hit the electric fly killer, the remote-controlled radios would go out of business! They sure had a time with that!

There was another peculiarity in this food concession where they sold hamburgers and sandwiches and so forth. It was run by the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Fallon. In the first year or two, the rodeo handled their beer concession themselves, but along about the third or fourth year, they decided the WCTU would also have the beer with their sandwiches. And Mrs. Carl Dodge, the mother of Carl Dodge, Sr., was in charge of it. And she came out, and we had the booth all set up for them, where they would handle hot dogs and sandwiches, soft drinks and beer. And they went on a strike; they weren't gonna handle the beer. So we had to build another

booth. They wouldn't handle the beer; they would take the money in for it, but it couldn't be in their booth! So we had to build another booth adjacent to theirs. And if you wanted a bottle of beer, you paid them, but you went over to the other booth and got your beer. This actually happened! The money was all right, but the beer was something else!

And along a different line, there was a very active man in the Fallon area in Boy Scouts by the name of Homer Bowers, who you probably know. And he was quite active in the Fallon community, and in Boy Scout work. And he came to me and wanted to put on a dog show in the arena at the fair with those Boy Scouts in there. And I told him, I said, "All right, if you handle it entirely, you go ahead."

And we turned the arena over to him to have his dog show. And he got the Boy Scouts and maybe other kids with dogs to come out with big dogs, little dogs. And of course, the boys who didn't belong to Boy Scouts heard about it. And when he got ready to go to his dog shows and all the parents were there, and they had all these dogs out there in the arena, some of these nonmember kids showed up with three or four sacks full of cats, and turned the cats loose in the arena! I hadn't seen Homer since eight o'clock that morning—he was out in the arena; I saw him that night. By eight o'clock, I didn't hardly recognize him, 'cause of that arena ground—it was just dirt. And when the cats come out of the sacks and the dogs took after the cats and the parents took after the dogs, it was some doing, I guess, that he never wanted to put another dog show on!

And I think we followed that up not too many years later with a very popular show at that time; it was a Shirley Temple baby show, when the parents dressed their babies as Shirley Temples and brought them to the

show. And I don't recall who we had for judges for that. When we put on the Shirley Temple baby show, it was goin' fine—no problems at all till it ended, and the results became known. Well, the judges were smarter than we were. The judges had left the fairgrounds by then. By the time the parents and—primarily the “parents” were grandparents and aunts and uncles—some fathers and mothers, but not too many. And they were really upset. And they actually went looking for the judge, but the judges were gone! That was the last Shirley Temple baby show we ever put on!

We also put on—in a serious vein—a rabbit show, I think one of the first rabbit shows in the state. Rabbits at that time were quite an industry in the Fallon area. In fact, it was a very fine rabbit show. We brought an outside judge to actually handle that. And then we put on a flower show. As far as I know, these were the first shows put on down in that area of that type. Especially the rabbit show. Flower shows might have been held in Reno before that, but we didn't know about 'em. And then we put on an art show and brought in judges to handle that.

As I stated before, the second or third year of the fair we built a small grandstand to handle a rodeo. We put the rodeo on in connection with the fair. And it was just a hardrock rodeo; they just went out and got the livestock everywhere they could find them. We had no microphone, and our announcer was a big man by the name of Jim Law, who wore a pair of striped railroad overalls, rode a little white horse, and had a big megaphone off of the old-type phonographs, and announced the events in the arena.

One of the managers I had was a man by the name of Pat Sanford, who was managing the rodeo for me. And the events got a little slow, so he offered the cowboys two dollars and a half to ride a calf, or a cow, each one, you

know. And I didn't know it, but the cowboys were as smart as he was; they would ride three or four jumps on a calf or a cow, and then jump off and get their two and a half.

And that night when I got uptown to the Sagebrush Cafe where Pat Sanford was payin' off in cash (we provided the cash), as I walked in the door, he had the silver—mostly silver and paper—money on top of a glass counter, and a fight started. And they tipped that thing over on the floor in the Sagebrush—all the money belongs to the fair. And the big argument was of whether or not they had really ridden the animal or not, and how many two-and-a-halves they were tryin' to collect! His idea of what a ride was and their idea of what a ride was, was entirely different! So immediately, we all got busy gatherin' up the money off the floor.

(Now this is jumpin' again.) The Indians—and this they'll probably question—but it's a peculiar thing to say that the state fair at Fallon revised the Indian dances in western Nevada. We hired what was supposed to be Indian dancers from Nixon to put on Indian dances in front of the grandstand. They didn't tell us that they had lost the art of their dances.

We also brought in a couple of big—and I mean big—Dutch women from Oakland to put on a doll show. And they were really Dutch women from the old country, and they had made these beautiful little dolls. So when the Indian dances started, they were in the grandstand, and they realized right away that the Indians didn't know what they were doing. So two gals got out in that alkali which was about ankle deep, and started to show these Indians how to do their dust dances, which was apparently the original Indian dance, as far as we know. And they taught the Indians how to do their Indian dances.

Years later, to make sure I was correct in my thinkin' on this, there was a minister at

Nixon at the church, who was there and saw the Indian dances and what had happened. And years later, when I went to a League of Cities meeting in Las Vegas, I heard that this minister was then with the church at Boulder City and had been there when this dancing came up. And I got a person to drive me out to Boulder, and we got the minister out of bed at midnight, at Boulder City—and told him who I was, and wanted to verify what had happened at the Nevada State fair back in the thirties on the Indian dances.

And he said, “Yes, that’s right.” He said the Indians had lost their art of dances. No doubt they reinstated them, as the Indian dances you see today, as far as I know, were reinstated or restarted by these two Dutch women. Now, he verified that. I just wanted to be sure that he was there, and he knew the Indians; he knew ‘em in Nixon—he was in their church. He was there that night. Well, this was forty years later. He and I sat there and talked till three o’clock in the morning about the Indian dances and the Indian bands!

’Course, when you had these Indian dances, you generally got the Indian band from Nixon. And you learned right away, the first time you did this, that you would have trouble the day the Indian band was gonna play. Come somewhere near time for the Indian dances and the band, and you had the dances with no band, and became really upset. So you were walkin’ around the fairgrounds looking for your Indian band when somebody said, “Oh, they’re in jail. They all got drunk. Maybe you better see the county sheriff,” So, you know—I shouldn’t say all, but some of ‘em, enough of ‘em, so that you didn’t have a band. And the sheriff was very cooperative; after we put up a hundred dollars or so and bailed ‘em out, why, we had an Indian band for the Indian dancers!

But this went on year after year, in there! It was one of the headaches of—. I don’t know if you want to run it or not, but—. I don’t want to infer that the Indians were all drunk or anything like that, so—but they were all, in the kettle—that’s where you found part of your Indian band.

THE STATE FAIR MOVES TO RENO

After the fair moved to Reno, it got so much more sophisticated, with the carnival aspect, and so forth—you must have had some really interesting experiences.

In 1953, a group of businessmen in Reno decided to have a fair. The state fair having closed in Fallon, there was no opposition from there, as there had been before. The leading man in gettin’ that fair underway was Pappy Smith of Harolds Club.

While he was in gaming here, he had come out of some of those northeastern states back there, New England states, where county fairs and state fairs were quite common, and he wanted to see a fair held in this area and he put up the original five thousand dollars in cash to have a fair. I was contacted by a man by the name of George Stetson to run the fair. And it was called the Washoe County Agricultural and Industrial Fair, Incorporated at that time. And it ran from 1953 until 1969, when practically the same group of people got the legislature to authorize the use of the name, Nevada State Fair, from 1969 on.

The first fair itself, in 1953, was a *hassle*. We put it all in the south portion of the fairgrounds, which was rented out to a man by the name of Fred Oliva. (He lives right up here, maybe you know him.) And he had an alfalfa crop in there, and not knowin’ whether there’d ever be another fair, gettin’ a pretty good rent from him, I didn’t want to disturb

the alfalfa crop, so we just got him to cut the alfalfa crop and leave the ditches there in the alfalfa field. [We] put up a tent that was sixty feet wide and 390 feet long over the alfalfa stubble.

Just before we opened the fair, one of our directors who was an insurance man, came into the office all excited and tellin' me that there was gonna be people killed up there, fall in the ditches and break their ankles, we'd have nothin' but lawsuits, those stakes those ropes and that tent—. And we just took a chance and went ahead and put the fair on that way. And believe it or not, we never had a complaint or a lawsuit over that operation of stumblin' around in those ditches in there, and the ropes and the tent stakes—.

We never knew how many people we had. They came in under the fence, and over the fence and around the fence, cut the fence down, walked across the irrigation ditch with water in it. And the only problem we had, after the fair was over with, we had quite a time shuttin' it down the first night. Mr. Smith came out about ten o'clock that night himself, personally, to see how it was goin', and when he saw what was gain' on, and the people comin', he just told me, "Don't worry about it, I'll see that the fair's paid for."

And then he'd go back to the Harolds Club, and as the shift got off duty, he'd send them out to the fair. One or two o'clock in the morning, I had as one of my gate men, Mr. Richards, who was mayor of Sparks. He came to me about one o'clock at night and wanted to go home. He said, "Bout every time I get ready to close up here, here comes another stream of people to see the fair."

We estimated we had some twenty-five thousand or thirty thousand people in there. And, I believe, that first fair, we paid back about forty percent of the expense, I think. The fair was set up and run without any tax

money of any kind, or any state tax, county tax, or any other tax, just financed by the local people, the local merchants, who contributed approximately thirty-thousand dollars to the first fair to run it.

From that time on, the fair, of course, has grown. I stayed with it for seventeen years. The last year I was there, we had an attendance of over fifty thousand people, but we never counted passes. We never counted *any* passes. That was fifty thousand *paid* admissions.

Just as a thought, when we started that first fair, I think that Archie Albright was the county agricultural agent in charge of the 4-H part of the fair, which was their achievement day for the year. And his request to us was for about 125 passes for 4-H club members that year. By the 1970s, which was my last year, we were givin' him—the new extension agent who was Louie Gardella at that time—1,200 to 1,400 passes a year for the 4-H club department. And we never had any question about how many passes we gave the 4-H. I never said very much to any people about it, but actually what I was doin' was, I was usin' the 4-H for my advertising—walking advertising—twelve months a year.

Lots of those 4-H people who got their passes, also got their first check they'd ever had in their life, or the first ribbon they'd ever won. And when we went to figure out the finances on the fair, you'd have a lot of 4-H checks outstanding, that had never been cashed. And you'd call their parents and "Well, oh yeah, she's got that check," or "he's had it, but it's pasted on the wall of their bedroom, or pinned to the wall. That's the first check (or first ribbon) they ever got." So we just automatically crossed off those 4-H checks that had never been cashed.

Isn't that neat to be able to give the kids that experience?

Oh yeah, that's right [laughs]. We just cleared the bank balance. The auditors were very considerate; [chuckle] they accepted our statement there were 4-H checks pinned to the wall somewhere, or pasted to the wall. They never cleared, they never came in.

The fair itself was something I always thought that the people wanted. Their reaction to the fair was a big one. It's hard to believe what they went through that first fair. We had practically no ground lights at all, it was about semi-dark, and the exhibits were all in the tents, but particularly that one long tent. And the people just swarmed over the place, and never uttered a complaint that I ever heard of. They might have talked to somebody else.

They apparently had wanted a fair for a good many years or something, and they always, durin' my own particular operation, featured the fair as a family event. I always argue that if the man gets up in the morning and says, "I'm goin' to the fair," everybody else says, "I'm going, too." If he said, "I'm going to a prize fight," or something other than that or some way—you don't get that reaction. And the fifty-cent admission. You got so many people that call you, "How much is it?"

"Fifty cents," you know.

"How much for children?"

"Twenty-five cents for children under twelve years of age.

And the usual answer would be from the woman, "Oh, I've got five dollars. We will be down pretty soon."

And you'd get the five dollars, admission, and hot dogs, and soda pop, and the carnival, and you had the whole five dollars. Parking was a little problem. In fact, this is 1980, and the same man that handled the parking for us in 1953 is still handling it for the fair; that would be Jerry Monaghan. Do you know Jerry? Yeah, he's still handling the parking [chuckle].

One of the main things that we had on the first fair, and the papers backed us on, too, was to have no politics in it of any kind—no political persons involved. And the papers who had that experience with the Fallon fair that went broke, and knew some of the problems we had had because of the political situation of a state fair, were very much in favor of that type of operation. All the board members agreed—none of 'em were in politics.

And it was run all those seventeen years that way; I ran it at fifty cents admission, and without bragging when I left there, they had put over thirty thousand dollars into the fairgrounds—cash—and had approximately the same amount left, as cash on hand, with a fifty-cent admission.

In Fallon, the fairgrounds were so small, that we couldn't even have the fair *on* the fairgrounds. We had to have the carnival we brought in for the fair uptown, on lots uptown. There just wasn't any room for it out at the fairgrounds.

Now, actually, gettin' back to Churchill County and Fallon, that your cooperation here was so much different. We didn't make much effort the first year in gathering that thirty thousand dollars up; we just sent out letters and contacted a few people. And you had no trouble with exhibit space at all. In fact, they were practically fightin' over exhibit space to get out there. And here, which was so much different from down there—you just had a few exhibits down there, but you didn't have any place to put 'em, and you couldn't draw the people to justify it in their situation.

It was just a wrong move for the fair, or the society; just happened to be, I think, in the wrong area. The roads were terrible, as I said before, and their accommodations were terrible, and the political situation was entirely against you all the way. Here, there

was no politicians involved at all. And in this particular fair here, we set it up so nobody could serve over three years—no director—three years on the board, and then they had to be replaced by other directors.

And this particular fair here, with their thirty directors—we had thirty directors—we met once a month, year 'round. And we'd meet at four o'clock and adjourn at five o'clock. In the seventeen years, we had a majority every time we had a meeting, every month. The businessmen took an interest in the thing, it was a success. They were glad to advertise the fair, that they were associated with it; you still see it today.

And they knew that you met and made a point of meetin' at four o'clock and adjourned at five—period. So they would shut up their businesses, give 'em an hour to relax to come over there where they didn't have to worry about money, where they'd been runnin' the store—all the different stores and so forth—they sit there for an hour and go through the fair business. At five o'clock, they'd go home. So when you met the next month, that's the way they operated.

And all those years after the first and second year, we just had a mailing list of underwriters. We'd send a letter out in April, and you were on their list of contributors for that year in their budget already, so you get your thirty, thirty-five thousand dollars and not even leave the office. In fact, they'd get other people for you, or new concerns comin' to town that would want to know how to contact to get in, to come in—we didn't take anything less than \$100. And except two or three year, they got back all the money they put in. If they put \$100 in we sent them a check back in November for \$100. In fact, you lost very few underwriters; you generally picked up some in there—some new outfit come to town, they'd want to come in.

I always think of fairs as one of the places that new merchants or new appliances is the ideal place for 'em to test, whether or not, whether the public are gonna be interested in. And the other thing that I always worked on was that "a fair is a family affair." Keep your admissions low, and have things that the younger people like—the older people, too—.

People come to a fair, I found out for one reason, and one main reason, is to visit. Yeah, they come there and then see somebody they haven't seen all year or some thin' and they start right in talking.

And also another thing I found out, one of the poorest exhibit spaces in the fair was right inside the front door. No exhibitor wants that space. People come in that front door and see somebody they know, and that's it—they don't look at the exhibits.

I had a little exhibitor with the carrot peeler and that thing, you know, came in one year and boy, I gave 'em an ideal space right by the front door. He came out of Sacramento. And he didn't have a microphone, all those people in that tin building. Next year came along, and he sent in his card for his exhibit space, and he put himself way back in the corner. I wrote to him; I said, "Well, you can have that same space."

And he said, "I don't want it. I don't want to be where people come in [chuckle], I want to be over in the back area. He sold out in a couple of days. Over there, people paid attention to him that time.

You must have a whole lot of little memories or tips like that on exhibits.

Well, one of the other things I consistently did with the fair—now that I'm out of it—I used to change the admission system every year—how people got into the fairgrounds. I'd set up the way I wanted people comin'

to the fairgrounds, where they'd park and where they'd pay their admission, and hope it'd work, and very seldom it did. When the people got there, or started comin', except for the exhibitors, I generally got out of the way. I figured it was their show, and I'd let them run it and watch and see what they did. And they'd fix you—admissions and parkin'—so we just take notes of everything they did, and the next year, we'd revise it that way, and the next year when they got the fair, they revised it again.

We had a terrible time with the high school kids comin' in over the board fence which was on the Sutro Street side of the fairgrounds. And I got a security man, it was a Reno policeman and put him in just a plain pickup truck. He put on his regular street clothes, except his cap, which he had on the seat beside him. And he drove around to the east side of the fairgrounds, over there in the dark. And as the kids would come over the fence, he'd pick 'em up; you know, they didn't know who he was. "Can I take you in?"

So they'd pile in, and he'd take 'em to the admission booth [chuckle], reach over and get his cap and put it back on. And you know, those kids never got mad. [Laughs] They'd been *took*! That was all there was to it. They'd scream and holler and go pay their admission—their reaction was something, you know. [Laughs] A nice ride in, and then you get a police cap on over at the admission booth.

Then they got rid of the board fence over there, put in a heavy wire fence, and we fastened it down. Of course, there's no boards to crawl over, and we thought we were fixed—we didn't put any security out there that year, but the first thing we knew, there were kids walking in, comin' across the field from the east side to the west side where the fair was, just about as heavy as before. So we got to watchin' what they were doin', and some of

these football players from the high school teams, would just back off twenty-five or fifty feet out there in the street, and hit that fence and they'd come up on the other side! [Laughs] The fence would give, you see, and there they'd be, they'd be in, and the other kids learned from them.

Admission gates at fairs are always a problem, I don't know whether I had any solution or not, other than to revise it every year to try to accommodate the people where they came in the next year and the way they'd handled it, and then watch and see what happened to the fair. Which something always did.

Thirty-five fairs in forty years I've handled—eighteen in Fallon, seventeen here. I'm glad I got out of the fair business—'course I was fairly well up in years. But the fair itself has to stay young. You have to keep up with changing times in fairs. The exhibitors will make you do it—you get new exhibitors every year with new articles, new things to sell. You just automatically progress with them, because that's what they're introducin' this year and what they're doin', they want to show you, you have to follow along with that.

We had a disastrous portion of a state fair. And I don't recall just which fair it was, but we booked an ice show at the time that ice shows were very popular here in the West, and people were goin' to San Francisco to see the ice shows. And the person we booked the show with decided he could squeeze in an extra show in Salt Lake City before he got here. As a result, he arrived late, and of course, the ice machine wouldn't make ice. And we had a grandstand of some five thousand people, *sold out* completely. They worked all one day and all one night and all the next day—had all the ice experts in the area from the ice companies and the ice cream people—and they couldn't get ice made.

The people were in the grandstand, we had a very fine orchestra, but as I said before, no ice. It was really a disaster. I would say to anybody who ever has a situation equal to this, and has their grandstand sold out and can't produce a show, that one thing we learned: don't honor the tickets that were sold to the people that had come to the show —cancel those tickets and arrange for a replacement ticket as the people leave the show. This one little item cost us about a year of work, replacin' tickets. In fact, one Indian man and his wife from Fernley came in the next year to the fair, and presented us with a ticket that they had bought at the ice show. She said he hadn't worn his suit since the ice show the year before, and when they sent it to the cleaner before comin' to this show, why they found the ticket [chuckle] for the ice show for the year before. But we of course, didn't honor that, that was a little too far away [chuckle].

Gettin' back to the fair business, both in Fallon and in Reno, my secretary with most of the fairs in Fallon (not all of 'em) was a woman by the name of Margaret Regan, who had been secretary for the dean of the College of Agriculture. Years later, she married and became Margaret Regan Nichols-married a Forest Service man, and I think they still live in Forest Hill, which is over in the Auburn area.

After she got married, then my secretary became Frances Baker, who was from Sparks and had worked for the Home Owners Loan Association here in Reno and also had served as secretary of the military draft board for Washoe County. She later married a man by the name of Sigg—Ernest Sigg. And she lives in Reno at the present time.

These two women carried practically all my secretary work for the entire period, except one year, when I had a girl by the name of Charlotte Towle, who filled in. She was

from the Fallon country. I suppose, like most business people, I think I probably had the best secretaries [chuckles]! In all of it, I don't recall of any difficulties or any arguments over hours or pay or errors or anything like that.

RACES AND RODEOS

I mentioned the use of the fairgrounds durin' 1913 to '53, and I'd like to add to that, that the hardtop races, auto races, were a heavy user for the several years in there at that time. Also the Aggie Club of the University of Nevada carried on a horse show each spring. And the Nevada Hereford Cattle Association were continual users. In fact, the original lease that was written between the state and Washoe County included the Aggie Club horse show, Nevada Hereford Association, and the Nevada state fair—or Washoe County fair, as it was originally called—as preferred users. In other words, their dates couldn't be dropped or absorbed by somebody else.

We ran both quarterhorse races and thoroughbred races durin' the original part of the Washoe county fair. And we probably should have scheduled prize fights, as well, with 'em, because when you went to settle up with the horse-race people, you could only let one of 'em in the office at a time, as we found out after the first night. You'd be surprised who owns the race horse, when you get down to pay off the purse! And while you're tryin' to decide in the office, they're outside, not talkin' about fightin', but in some cases actually fightin'. And then in the case of who's gonna run which race and where, and so forth, if it's a quarterhorse or a thoroughbred, and how it's gonna be run or what the purses are, that's somethin' else.

However, they're not alone in that. There's not too much difference between them—except the physical aspect—and the flower

show people! Or the artists' association! [Laughs] They all have their preferences. They all have their likes and dislikes and ideas. It's not that I never felt there was any personal—it's just the things in life that they're interested in, whether it's a flower or a picture, whatever it happens to be, or what type of horse they're interested in.

They had an automobile race there—a big one—in the twenties. And my friend was one of the inspectors of the automobile race; it was the big races. I saw the race from sittin' in the middle of a haystack in the middle of a field. [Laughing] I definitely wanted to get in! We went down early, and he was gonna be a judge in the corner. And there was a haystack right out in the middle of the field. And I went out and crawled up in the haystack. Before I got down, the haystack was covered with businessmen from Reno, not only college students! [Laughing] But I was really surprised! I looked down, and here comes some real businessman, climbing up [laughing] on the haystack to watch the automobile races!

Do you want to talk about the Reno Rodeo a little bit? Since you were on that board of directors for so many years and Reno was the big town the Fourth of July—every year, the Fourth of July Rodeo. And then they changed it.

I can talk very authentic on that, havin' been an acquaintance, or maybe you'd call it a friend, of George Wingfield, Sr. and also his [son] George Wingfield, Jr. When this change of date from the Fourth of July was brought up, the original discussion was that there wasn't sufficient rooms in Reno at the Fourth of July if people came in and filled up the hotels and motels, and so there was no room for the people to come to the rodeo.

Havin' been on the rodeo board and having talked personally to George Wingfield,

Sr., who owned the Riverside Hotel and the Golden at that time—he just said this assumption was not a fact. His son was on the other side, promotin' the change to the dates.

It was a very bad mistake, I think, personally, because they changed it from the Fourth of July, which was a natural date for rodeos, to earlier in June. And the minute that they got off that date, other rodeo towns picked up the Fourth of July. And at that time, the American Rodeo Association, cowboys' rodeo association, wasn't organized as they are today. So you had cowboys tryin' to participate in every rodeo that they could get to, either by car or airplane. You weren't sure what kind of contestants you had, or whether they'd be there. And they would be in Reno in the afternoon and Klamath Falls at night; then maybe Elko, somewhere else, at a time. And when this happens in the show business and you lose a date at the present time (in those years, too), there was always plenty of people to pick up those good dates, and you can't get 'em back.

Just an instance, the Tulare County fair in California had the Foley-Burke carnival for thirty or forty years. And then, they decided they wanted to change the carnival, so they dropped them on the same date that the Nevada state fair wanted the Foley-Burke carnival. And we got the Foley-Burke carnival on their date. But the next year the Tulare fair decided they wanted it back, and they were out of luck. They just stayed at the Nevada State fair. In fact, they're still there today, directly or indirectly, after all these years.

But that rodeo thing was a—I never did know who had enough power to move that rodeo off those dates, 'cause it wasn't George Wingfield, Sr., I know that. Why his son was involved on the other side, I have no idea either, because Mr. Wingfield owned both the hotels at that time, and he had no shortage of

rooms, which was the reason the rodeo dates was supposedly moved.

It has always seemed like kind of an exercise in greed.

He just was sure that rooms situation didn't exist.

They wouldn't be able to get back on the Fourth of July again today; it's just gone. The RCA—Rodeo Cowboy Association, who practically run rodeos today anyhow, and the rodeos today are entirely different. See, in my memory, the first rodeo at the Washoe County fairgrounds, or state fairgrounds, if you want to call it, was held in 1919, or 1920. At that time, the Mapes family was heavily involved in it, and you had a different type of rodeo. You just went out to these ranches and picked up bucking horses when you could get 'em, and tried 'em out, and used them. I believe it ran for a few years, and didn't continue; they dropped it. The present rodeo was started in 1935 by this other group of people.

But the rodeos—they were entirely a different situation from the rodeo you see today. Probably the horse that you see the man riding—a bucking horse or the bulldogging steer—has been carefully selected by the RCA, and the same cowboys pretty much follow the rodeos from early in the spring through the fall. Probably in lots of cases, they're better acquainted with the horses and bulls and so forth than they are with their own family, by that time. Today you can buy a canned rodeo. I call 'em "canned" because you can call up a rodeo man with livestock, and he'll put you on a rodeo within a week, all set to go. In the old days you didn't; you spent months gatherin' up the horses and the riders and the contestants. If the cowboys came to town, they stayed. Today they don't. They get done in the afternoon and they're gone to the next rodeo.

Just as an off-subject thing, runnin' the fairgrounds, they have to work rodeo, and having the Brahma bulls left in the corrals down there at the fairgrounds, some people wanted to put on a rodeo, and they were long on contestants but short on Brahma bulls. In their drawings they decided they would run the same Brahma bull through the rodeo bucking chutes in the afternoon and again at night. And that sounded fine till the owner of the livestock showed up, and he informed them that you can't run those Brahma bulls through that rodeo chute twice a day.

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "They can only go once. They won't go twice a day." He said, "You can run 'em the next day but not twice a day." [Laughs] That was interesting to me; that was a fact! I thought he was kiddin' me, but it was a fact. Once a day was all they'd go through the bucking chutes. [Laughs] If you wanted 'em to buck twice a day, and there was nothin' doin'! [Chuckles] Maybe the bulls belong to a union.

Who were some of the other people that served a long time on that rodeo board, and who—?

Charles Sadlier was the first president of the rodeo in 1935. Harry Frost is still on it, [chuckling] from the start! Ray Peterson was on it, Howard Doyle was on it, Ray Jefferson was on it, Lester Hilp was on it, Eddie Questa was on it, Glen Meyers was on it. And just offhand, I can't think of all of 'em, but, that's some that served on it at that time.

How did they feel about—did they split on the Fourth of July issue?

Somewhere back in there this thing got lost, and I've never been able to figure out how [laughing] it got changed! It got some politics mixed up in there somewhere. And why they

ever changed the dates, I don't know. They had the argument of rooms. When the rodeo was first started in '35, Reno was pretty dead town on the Fourth of July; there wasn't much to do. And they started the rodeo to bring people in. And then the gambling and floor shows developed; there was plenty of people who came to Reno to fill up the rooms and so forth, but not too many would go to the rodeo. A large number of those people who came to Reno *at that time* never even knew there was a rodeo on, because there were so many rodeos in California that you could go to one practically every weekend over there. And most of those people comin' in here were from California. And you'd have banners across the street and so forth and so on to advertise the Reno Rodeo. And my wife and I one time got patriotic and opened up a room or two to some of these people who had supposedly come to see the rodeo here—to take care of the crowd. And we never talked to any of 'em who knew there was a rodeo in town! They came over to gamble, not to the rodeo! They just asked, "What rodeo?" [Laughing] "Where is it?" Now, I don't know how you could get a more direct answer than that.

Today, of course, the Reno Rodeo operation is different. They—I wouldn't want to say it to them; they'd probably get mad—but they practically copied the Nevada state fair's operation of meeting every month and makin' real arrangements.

You were here a long time; you recall if you watched the rodeo parade back years ago; half the time the parade got lost. And you'd find 'em goin' different streets and up different ways.

We started out with the rodeo parade in '35, and we used to hire the Indian band. And they had a real band at Nixon at that time—cowboy outfits and so forth. And

used to pay 'em five dollars apiece to come in and take part in the rodeo—play in the parade. And we used 'em for several years till the musicians' unions [chuckling] decided that they would take the Nixon Indian band into their jurisdiction, and that became so expensive that we could no longer afford to use them. That was one of the good features of that rodeo, I thought, was that real Indian band. And they were real Indians. But the union extended their area and made 'em raise their rates.

As far as I know right now, the rodeo itself is in very good shape financially. They've had some very good years. Of course, the big grandstand was there for years—burned down. On the grandstand itself—it burned to the ground, that old wooden grandstand—I was told by people who actually knew about it that it was a duplicate of the grandstand at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky. Both the race track, which was mile race track, and the grandstand, I believe, were duplicates of Churchill Downs. The race horse people use the fairgrounds Pretty heavy from 1913 till, oh, 1944, '45—trained horses There.

I believe that Wingfield had a horse trained there that on the Kentucky Derby. And to the best of my memory, the horse's name was Thatcher—General Thatcher. George Thatcher, of course, was one of Wingfield's attorneys.

And Nevada's had more real race horses than people generally know about.

Oh yes, I think we talked on that race situation the other day, which I talked about how the horse races were moved from Nevada to California.

I was thinking about the Allen family in Fallon, and all of their fancy horses.

While you're bringing that up, we had a horse show down at the fair in Fallon, and one of the professors at the University was the judge. And of course, when you take place in those horse shows, you're supposed to have registered horses, all registered and so forth. And he judged the horses—Dodge brothers had some horses at that time, and Allens had horses— and he judged the horses and placed a certain horse in a certain position. And immediately somebody showed up at the office, that this horse wasn't registered. And again as in the baby show and the other things, the judge had [laughing]— had left the area, and wasn't available to judge it! Nothing against judges, but they know; they're pretty well-educated [laughing] in what's happened!

While I was a director of the Reno Rodeo, I was also in charge of the state fairgrounds for the state Agricultural Society. And it was really an uncomfortable position because it's hard to believe that the animosities of 1913 and '15 state fair goin' from Reno to Fallon were still being carried on to a certain extent by the prominent people of Washoe County and Churchill County. The Agricultural Society was in charge of the fairgrounds, and the executive committee mainly lived in Fallon. They were very reluctant to spend any money to help the Reno Rodeo Association because of the bad feelings, and also because they didn't have very much state appropriation to carry on. So you had a conflict continually. The Rodeo Association was a very loosely-organized association at that Time. It was started in 1935, this particular rodeo, and the first president was Charlie Sadlier, who was manager of the Riverside Hotel for George Wingfield.

They had rodeos continuously practically up till World War II, and then it was discontinued durin' the War. And then it started again after World War [II].

Bein' a director of the [chuckling] Reno Rodeo Association and livin' in Reno and bein' on the executive committee, with this background feeling, was quite a problem. While the executive committee of the Agricultural Society remained fairly permanent, your directors for the rodeo changed from year to year, and they didn't understand that the Rodeo Association didn't own the fairgrounds. And they wanted certain things, and they couldn't get 'em, and they couldn't understand why; it was state property and so forth.

The Rodeo Association was run pretty much by the county and the city of Reno; the physical equipment came from there. And each year about a month or two before the rodeo, the Rodeo Association would meet and become very active, and conduct the rodeo to the best of their ability. And after it was over, they would practically abandon it for another year, and didn't want to pay any of the bills or do any of the upkeep, and discussions about the insurance on the grounds and the rodeo equipment and who owned it. Eventually, that situation cleared up by the state Agricultural Society leasing the fairgrounds to Washoe County.

Besides bein' a member of the Reno Rodeo Association and Masonic lodge, which I mentioned, and post adjutant of Darrell Dunkle Post Number One, I've been a member of the Reno Rotary Club for forty-two years, and the Western Fairs Association durin' the seventeen years I operated the Washoe County or Nevada state fair.

The Western Fairs Association was not in existence durin' the years of the Fallon state fair. It was formed after World War II and became a clearinghouse for the fairs here in the West, which was a very good thing. It gave all the fairs in the West a chance once a year to meet and arrange their dates so they didn't have a group of fairs on the same time.

They gave the suppliers, or people who were connected with the fair operations, such as carnivals and so forth, a chance to clear their dates, and also provided the fair managers with a reference on the type of people you were dealin' with—made them a little more responsible.

In the old days, the carnivals used to jump from town to town, and land in a vacant lot wherever they could clear up with the city or the county, run their fair, and leave town before anybody could settle up with them. Under the Western Fairs these things ended. You knew who the fair people were, the amusement people, entertainment shows and so forth—who you would deal with. And they also knew who they were dealin' with.

Probably improved the caliber of people, too, on both sides.

Oh, it improved its caliber. Oh, well, it did, yes. Like your carnivals in the old days—when a carnival came to town, everybody got their shotgun out to see what was gonna happen. Under the Western Fairs they were responsible. And then also at that same time the Internal Revenue got involved in carnivals and shows. So they had to file income tax. And then the insurance people became heavily involved because of the types of accidents; they had—it made 'em carry heavy insurance, *and* good equipment, which, of course, also cleaned up the type of employees these shows had—more responsible people, in the deal.

A LOOK BACKWARD

Did you ever have a fair that just simply flopped?

I have never bragged on this, but to put it right, the fairs were good to me, as I have

seen 'em. I can look back over thirty-five fairs, and outside of that problem we had on the first one, which I wasn't actually the full manager—maybe not that it made any difference—and maybe I was just lucky in putting on fairs where people were kind of hungry for fairs, somethin' different that the whole family could go to—. Even under handicapped conditions, I can't look back and think of any real serious complaints in there. I think the first one we put on in Fallon, or second, the roof leaked. And at that particular time back in the twenties, you had a lot of [homemakers] taking part, homemakers, and their lacework and things like that. And we come out in the mornin', and the roof leaked and it had been rained on.

And then when the fair was down here at the fairgrounds, we had one that ran four days, and it rained practically the whole four days, and there was mud holes all over the place. We got to where sand was used and when the sand wouldn't take up the water; we were actually usin' bales of straw to try to keep the people out of the water. And we had planks across to the ticket booths where they could pay their fifty cents.

And the carnival man came in in the afternoon, and he says, "What's the matter with these people over here? It's rainin' out there; it's been rainin' for days, and they're still coming." He looked down the road, he said, "In California they'd be goin' home! There' re women comin' in fur coats, and they wipe off the seat with their handkerchiefs! Our rides are shorting out—[laughing] electricity!" No complaint!

Of course, I think one of the big reasons for that was that the admission was fifty cents [chuckles], and twenty-five cents for kids, and little kids free, so that might have had a lot to do with—!

Which is the one that you're the proudest of?

Oh, I think that actually the one that was really a fair that really had the backing of the people was the Nevada state fair here. The one in Fallon—it was nothin’ against the people in Fallon—as I said before, had come through a political gimmick in the area, that by the state puttin’ a fair in the area would get a certain amount of state money from it. And that never seemed to disappear. Even the merchants seemed to think, well, here comes the fair; here’s our chance to get some state money. And this fair here in Reno, which you realize had no state money, was run strictly privately with no tax money of any kind. As far as I know, there’s only one other fair in the West that runs that way—up in Washington—with no tax money of any kind. The local merchants put up their underwriting money every year, to finance the fair and that plus your entry fees, and your gate admissions, and exhibitor space have paid the cost of the fair and generally returned all their money to ’em; except maybe the first four or five, they get their money back every year, and then start over the next year.

The rodeo had that same situation, but they acquired a cash balance of a pretty good size over the years, and they dropped their underwriters, we call it, where they didn’t ask the local people to underwrite it. And that turned out to be a bad mistake, because the people no longer had their money in the rodeo. And they eventually went back to underwriting it again for the rodeo on the same basis.

But this fair down here, and ‘course, havin’ been the first fair manager—. It went from attendance, as far as we could count that first fair (I don’t know how many people we had or didn’t have), it ran practically all night—we guessed it around twenty-five thousand. Seventeen years later when I left, it was running over fifty thousand people. But

you’ve got to admit, too, the people increased in the area also, and such, which added to your attendance, and as I said before, low admissions; and something of a family event that they could go to. If you run it and keep it in order and clean and not have rackets goin’ on, fightin’, and all that, why, people can send their kids down there and leave ’em—”Go to the fair, and pick them up”—they’ll do it.

Is there some year that really stands out?

No, the fairs were pretty uniform; we ran ’em, as I said once before, to suit the people, and they seemed to accept ’em, from the basis of attendance and the lack of complaints. And you find about the same number of people go to a fair. For instance, one year I think it rained the first two days of the fair, Thursday and Friday. We had practically no attendance. And then it came Saturday and Sunday, we got our attendance. Fact, on one Saturday, we got over thirty thousand people, because they hadn’t been able to come as far as I know—Thursday and Friday. They’re fair people, they go to the fair.

Well, it sounds unusual, I would think, for a person that has run this number of fairs to be lucky enough to look back and say, well, this one went haywire, or that one went haywire, or the people didn’t come, or things like that.

One year in Fallon, myself and the newspapers got at odds. And I probably got a little stubborn, figuring I could run a fair without the newspapers anyhow. So I gave it a try. And I didn’t give ’em any news; put the fair together, and we got out posters, which we used at that time to advertise. You didn’t have radio or TV; you just depended on the posters and the 4-H and that type of thing—and the Homemakers. And I happened to guess right: I figured about a week or ten days before the fair, people would start callin’ the newspapers,

wantin' to know about the fair. And that's the way it turned out. And then the newspaper people started lookin' for me to get news on the fair, and we got along, got it straightened out. But that was just one of those situations for one fair.

I always thought my biggest advertisement of the fairs was the 4-H and the Future Farmers. We always tried to really go a little on that side too—those checks that I told you about and those ribbons that they got hangin' in their room advertise the fair. There's no better advertisement than the backyard advertising, whether it's the fair or any show. "How was the show?" People in the backyard hangin' up their clothes, talkin' about it—you're on. If they talk against it, you're out!

CIVIC AFFAIRS AND POLITICAL SERVICE

In the late twenties, I was post adjutant of American Legion Post Darrell Dunkle Number 1. This was the Number 1 post in the state of Nevada. (Briefly, I might mention how the name Darrell Dunkle evolved. He was the son of Dan Dunkle, who was the county treasurer of Washoe County for a good many years, and supposedly was the first Washoe County soldier killed in Europe in World War I. So when the American Legion was organized, they chose his name for the post.) In my position of adjutant for the post durin' the late twenties, my office was downtown in the YMCA—the Agricultural Extension office—which was adjacent to the present Mapes Hotel. And I also, with my wife, lived in a house where the present Ponderosa Hotel is located.

The reason I mention this is because at that particular time in the history of the country, there was a drought area in the Midwest, and lots of the soldiers who had returned from World War I by that time had acquired a wife, some children, and generally a Model T Ford. With the poor conditions of livin' in

the Midwest, most of 'em had relatives who had left there durin' World War I, or previous, and moved to Southern California. And this gave them an excuse to come west and hunt up their aunts and uncles and relatives who supposedly were livin' a life of leisure in the Southern California country.

But my position as adjutant in the Legion. was kind of a welfare organization to most of these travelin' Legionnaires. And they would arrive in Reno, unfortunately for me, generally on a Saturday or Sunday, with their wife, their children, their broken-down car, and needed help. 'Course, the American Legion didn't meet on Saturday or Sunday, and I found myself pretty much as a sole relief agency! Of course, you always had the insurance that when the Legion met, you'd get your money back. But the Legion was as poor as the Legionnaires. So when you'd bring it up at the meeting, it was generally a very brief conversation, and you just forgot it. So you were runnin' a one-man relief agency [laughing] for the Legionnaires to a certain extent!

It points out the condition of the Legionnaires and the position they found themselves in after World War I, when you had a drought condition. And 'course, this was just previous to the start of the general Depression in the Midwest, also.

Regardin' the Legion, I've been a member of the American Legion Post Darrell Dunkle Number 1 since 1927, and still am a member at this time. I also in my lifetime have been a member of the Masonic Lodge Washoe County Number 35 for fifty-five years at this time. Served as a director of the Reno Rodeo Association for seven years, following World War II.

EARLY POLITICAL INTERESTS

In the political field—I think I probably heard my first political speech and became interested in politics, in my freshman year at the University, when the famous William Jennings Bryan came to Reno and made a talk before the student body, at the Mackay Stadium. I don't know whether he was campaigning for any particular office at that time, or just tourin' the country, but he made quite an impressive speech of which I only remember his famous statement, he'd rather be right and in the minority, than wrong and in the majority. Should I mention the monkey trial just as a finish to this?

Oh, sure.

Well, 'course, he was quite a famous politician and campaigner and "silver-toned" speaker. A few years later, he and Clarence Darrow became involved in the Scopes monkey trial in Tennessee, where Jennings Bryan based his argument on the side of the Bible—evolution—and Clarence Darrow took the side of Darwin theory. At the end of that trial, if my memory is correct,

just about the time the trial was over, Bryan died.

Now gettin' back to politics, I've been a life-long Republican. My first vote for President of the United States was for Warren G. Harding in 1920, and I voted in a little ranch precinct in the Spanish ranch area, north of Tuscarora, Nevada.

Following that, I didn't have much to do with politics until 1926 when I was in the Agricultural Extension Service. At that time, a man by the name of John Sinai, a Reno attorney, was chairman of the Washoe County Republican party. And one day he called me at my office, and wanted to know if I could suggest anybody to run on the ticket as an assemblyman—as a candidate—and also for Washoe County commissioner as a candidate. Because bein' in the farm work, I knew the farm people; I suggested Ernest Kleppe as a possible candidate for assembly, and for Washoe County commissioner, I suggested a man by the name of James Peckham.

Actually, I shouldn't have suggested anybody, because I was in the federal employment and not in a position to recommend candidates. However, both these men ran for office; Mr. Kleppe was elected to the assembly and later on was elected Washoe County commissioner. James Peckham was elected to the Washoe County Commission and served twenty-five years. Finally, he did not file for reelection.

I guess my next election activity involved Senator Oddie, and later on, Senator Pat McCarran, who was elected in 1932. Pat McCarran did very little campaignin'. In fact, I had a friend in the state Democratic office, who told me that they did practically nothin' to help him. And he was elected, very much as a surprise, along with the landslide for President Roosevelt. And of course, he served

a good many years—was a good senator—and died in office years later.

In the 1934 election, I helped George “Molly” Malone. He ran on the Republican ticket for U.S. Senator against Key Pittman and was badly beaten. He ran again against Pat McCarran in 1944 and was defeated. I was his northern Nevada campaign manager. After that election, his supporters and some of his opponents came to me and suggested that he never run for office again. After we left that meeting, he and I walked down to the corner where the old city hall used to be on First and Center Street. The first thing he said, “I’m gonna run the next election.” He said, “You know, Key Pittman ran three times before he was elected.”

So I never mentioned what his friends and opponents thought about him on the third time. Of course, he was elected when he ran the next time [1946], through a conflict amongst the Democrats between previous[ly] Governor Carville, who had appointed Berkeley Bunker to fill in, and then Bunker filed against Carville for Senate, and beat Carville in the primaries. Pat McCarran became involved and threw all his support to Malone, who was elected, as he said, after runnin’ a third time.

Then, after that election, in 1952, he ran against the famous Thomas Mechling [chuckle], whose closest connection, I guess, with Nevada, was the fact that his wife was from Wells, Nevada. He really defeated Alan Bible in the primaries, and Malone was elected through that deal. Then he was defeated in 1958 by Senator Cannon.

On my thinking of Malone, I believe, in the story that I’ve told about him, I kind of left out his main living here. He and a man by the name of Tom King had the King and Malone engineering firm, in between political rounds. And that firm is still in existence, Number

One East First Street, and is run by [Peter Guisti]. He still operates the engineering firm of King and Malone, while both Malone and King have been dead for several years. Talkin’ to him, he said it was just kind of an easier thing for him to do to carry on the firm under that name.

I wondered if you wouldn’t talk a little more about George Malone, and how you ran his campaign. What you thought his strengths were, what his weaknesses were.

George Wilson Malone—usually known as “Molly” Malone— and I first met at Constantia, California. He was goin’ to the University of Nevada at that time, and had been retained by the Pyramid Land and Stock Company to do surveyin’ work for the company. He had a group of two or three other University boys with him, workin’ on a surveyin’ team. This was after World War I. He was very active in the formin’ of the American Legion, especially Darrell Dunkle Post Number 1. Also, I think, another fact that people don’t know, Malone was the first person that brought the Boy Scouts into Nevada.

They didn’t have much of a setup at that time. The first real Boy Scout worker he brought into here was a man by the name of [Alva L.] Russell; in fact, he lived right down the street here, both he and his wife. The Scouts didn’t have much money, and both Mrs. [Janie] Russell and himself worked as Scout leaders.

About that time, Malone didn’t go to the University again. He never graduated. He was an engineerin’ student, of course. While he was workin’ at Constantia, he was also a water engineer for the Walker River irrigation district at Yerington, where he met his wife—the woman he later married— Ruth

Mosslander, which you probably already knew. She had been working in a bank at Yerington.

Followin' that time, Malone went into politics, and was appointed state engineer, in which he practically carried the whole load of lobbyin' for Boulder Canyon. The section of Boulder Canyon Act, in which Nevada received certain rights, can be practically contributed to this one man. He lobbied so heavy the first two years and spent so much state money, that the senate finance committee, I believe, got an act passed and made it an offense of some kind to exceed your budget with federal funds. But they did pick up the money that he had spent over the budget. However, this didn't deter him the second time around; he got the things that Nevada has today. He spent all the budget money, and mortgaged his home on California Avenue, and spent that and lost that too, because he had to get the act through and get it completed. And while they never censured him, there was quite a lot in the papers about it. However, they did pick up his over-expenditure of his budget.

Malone came to Nevada from Kansas, I believe—Kansas or Iowa, I'm not exactly sure just which. He left there after a boxing match between himself and another neighbor boy, where the farm people stirred up a boxing match to decide whether Malone or this other person was the best boxer.

This next part of the story was not told me by Malone but was told me by [Harry Reppert] a man who later became a state engineer. He was there at this boxing match; it was held on a ranch. Accordin' to him, they were boxin' or fightin'—whatever you want to call it—and Malone hit this other young man, and knocked him down. The fight was right in the barn, right along a railroad track. And he knocked him down. There

was a doctor in the crowd, and the doctor assumed the other young man wasn't gonna live—but he did live. And accordin' to [Mr. Reppert], Malone went out the back door of the barn, and there was a freight train going by. And [Reppert], who told me the story, said he never saw Malone again for a few years. [Harry Reppert] became a federal land surveyor for the federal government here in Nevada and was surveyin' for the federal government in Lovelock area. He went into town to hire a man to work on the survey crew, and he looked down the Street, and Malone was walkin' up the Street (some few years later). I don't know whether that's interestin' or not. I knew Malone so well, he never mentioned this background at all.

From then when he was in the state engineer's office, he became pretty interested in politics again and then finally he ran for United States Senator against Key Pittman. He and I talked it over before he ran; he came up to my house and told me he was gonna run against Key Pittman. Malone had a theory on money that most people don't have. He didn't have any money, and he kinda dealt with money like you deal with water—it's just something you use. And I said, "Well, you don't have much money, and Pittman's a pretty strong man."

And he said, "Well, I never did have any, and they'll probably bury me in a pauper's grave. I probably won't ever have any [money]."

We went out electioneering, and he didn't do too good, because Pittman was so strong at that time. Following that, he was in surveyin' work, and did a lot of surveyin' right after World War I in Tonopah country, on those mines down in there, when they were arguin' about whether the vein was on your property or on somebody else's property—he had those maps, and did that work.

I've never heard anybody say he wasn't a good engineer, only that he wasn't such a big success in politics. They said he had a good mind.

He was very much of an individual. He wasn't subject to pressure by anybody that I ever knew of, and as well as I knew him [chuckles]—. I never knew anybody could pressure him into doin' something that he didn't think was all right. I think he was very honest, a little lax with his credit charges around the area, but money wasn't his life—it was something he used.

One of the times he ran against McCarran for senator, before he was elected, he was in arrears with the Internal Revenue. And as I walked down the street one day, I ran into a man by the name of Bert Cohen, who was workin' for the Internal Revenue. And he stopped me on the Virginia Street bridge and he said, "Where can I find Molly Malone?"

And I said, "He's up in his office." And I said, "Why, Bert?"

"Well," he said, "the Internal Revenue director told me to go see him about his Internal Revenue taxes and so forth and so on.

And I said, "What are you talkin' to me for?"

And he said, "I'm not about to go see a man that's runnin' for United States Senator about his Internal Revenue tax, because he might get elected." [Laughing] This actually happened! So he didn't go see him. I cite this just as an example of how he regarded money.

His wife could take care of any excess money that might be available [chuckling]. She was loyal to Molly, of course. They'd lived in the Riverside Hotel for a week, and they had a twelve hundred-dollar bill. Malone was goin' out in the state to campaign. I told him we just didn't have the finances to handle that, and I'd have to control Ruth some way. So he moved her from the Riverside Hotel to the

Overland Hotel, and apparently, as far as I knew, he gave her instructions to stay in that room till he got back. And about the end of the week when he was comin' back, she contacted me (I was gonna go down to Fallon to meet him) and asked me if she could go along with me to Fallon.

There was a little peculiar situation, him comin' to Fallon, too, at that time. *Life* magazine called me long distance from somewhere and wanted a picture of Malone as a candidate, and Pat McCarran, for their *Life* magazine, which was quite popular at that time. And we had him come in from Wells, Nevada, hired a car and driver, and drove all night to get to Fallon, so he could be there for the photographer of *Life* magazine and have his picture taken. They took the picture. And out of this whole thing, they took a picture of Pat McCarran gettin' a shave in Virginia City. And after all our expense and trouble, the only picture that was ever run, was a picture of Pat McCarran gettin' a shave in Virginia City [laughs].

I realize, like everybody else in this world, not only Malone—he had friends and enemies, both—but they can say what they want about him. One of the things he talked about when he was senator, which they should've listened to, was "funny money." Probably other people used that term, too, but he was the first one I ever heard use the factor of gettin' into "funny money," and we're certainly headed for funny money. He became a great friend of Happy Chandler, and he had Malone doin' a lot of field work for him out in the bushes over in the Orient and that country durin' the start of World War II. Chandler after that became national Baseball Commissioner.

He also wrote a book on the assets and liabilities of the western United States, which was published, a big, heavy book. It has been used from the engineer's point of view and that part of things, *Industrial West*.

In runnin' his campaign, I had very little to do with raisin' of the money when he ran for senator the term before he was elected. And the people, organizations, he got money from, I never heard—a lot of 'em I never heard of, but he had some very fine contacts in there.

Of course, as a prize fighter, a fighter, I don't know what his possibilities were, but he decided [laughing] to be an engineer! Malone, personally, was one of the most physically fit people that I was ever associated with. He never seemed to tire, his weight was around 160-170 pounds, and he required very little sleep; in fact, if he came over to your house to visit you, and you happened to slack in the conversation for fifteen minutes, he might go to sleep. Wait for a half hour and get up and be ready to go. He just seemed to have an unlimited amount of energy.

He came from nowhere, you might say, into this state. He was quite an athlete, in practically all stages of the game. And while lots of people—there's still some people very critical of him, I have a standard answer to most of 'em: "He became a United States Senator, and you didn't. And he didn't get there easy.

He just fought his way right up. I remember one of the people I contacted for him was Fleischmann, Major Fleischmann. Major Fleischmann at that time was living at Lake Tahoe, and Molly thought he might be a good source of political funds. Of course, he was, if he wanted to give. I called Major Fleischmann for him at Lake Tahoe, and told him what I was doin', and he advised me that he didn't make contributions to local people, politics, that he made his contributions direct to the national parties. And he was a Republican, he had sent his contribution to the national Republican party.

And you've got to admit, he was elected senator by two unusual situations. The first

time he was elected was the controversy between McCarran and Carville and Bunker, in which Bunker defeated Carville, and Pat McCarran threw his weight to Malone. That elected Malone for the first time for a four-year term to the United States Senate. And the second time was when Mechling defeated Bible in the primary—Alan Bible— and Mechling bein' practically unknown in the state, people voted for Malone. He got in for a second time and by that time, they'd changed the term to six years from the four-year term. And the next time he ran, of course, he ran against Howard Cannon, who defeated him and is still United States Senator.

So he had McCarran's support twice?

To some extent, yes.

Well, he had McCarran's support against Mechling.

Indirectly. No against Carville and Bunker. Carville and Bunker and McCarran, they got into a hassle of some kind.

He got McCarran's support in that one, and then he also got McCarran's support against Mechling.

Oh, yeah, in Mechling's, yeah. See, but the *It wasn't well-known, was it?*

No, no. Well, it didn't—the actually, the Bunker-Carville-McCarran deal was publicized. That was a battle. I don't know what happened there in that thing. I didn't run that campaign, but the background was that Carville, as governor, had appointed Bunker to the senate, and then when Carville ran for the senate, Bunker filed against him, you remember? Bunker beat Carville in the

primary—and then McCarran threw his weight to Malone after that.

And of course, as a lot of people are aware of, Pat McCarran got quite a lot of his support after he was elected, from Republicans; strict, right out, they just supported McCarran. I don't think he could have been elected as many times as he was without that Republican support.

McCarran was—and I knew McCarran and I wouldn't know this personally—was not too popular in the Democratic party the first time he was elected. He'd had problems, I guess, when he'd been to the state supreme court or something—they had differed along the way. In fact, they had practically cast him aside, from what you read, by the time he got elected to the United States Senate. He wasn't considered a good, loyal Democrat or something, and he filed, and as we talked before, went in on Roosevelt's coattail.

Tell me about the participation of the political higher-ups in the machine, like Biltz and Mueller, in these campaigns.

Oh, I guess you'd actually start further back than that, with Wingfield, actually. Wingfield, of course, built the party up with his finances and his friends, and as we've said before, and that was part of it; the whole thing came out of Tonopah and Goldfield which is just practically abandoned places today.

And then, Wingfield was instrumental in bringin' Noble Getchell into the political party as national committeeman, and Getchell, I believe, was senator at that time from what, Lander County. And he carried the load for several years, and eventually decided not to run—I believe he was followed from that area by the name of—Senator [Lemaire], I think, was elected from there. Getchell

became national committeeman and stayed on for years and years, which had a lot to do with these "Young Turks" becomin' active, the continual operation, and the fact as I said before, there was always a feeling that we were beatin' the bushes for Republicans and electin' Democrats, through the combination of the two parties in the same building, with an open door between 'em.

In between there, came a man who people remember him more —Dud Day. He had the Buick agency on the corner downtown, where Patterson's store is located now. There was no bridge across the river there, at that time. But he didn't become active for too long—one or two years—in the Republican party.

Well, John Mueller, of course, was a James Scrugham Democrat protege, and Scrugham, of course, was governor, later congressman, later senator. As far as I know, in the year when Scrugham had difficulty in the state because of Malley and Cole absconding with funds, and a strong movement to replace Scrugham as governor, all of a sudden, one morning, John Mueller became Republican, and a Balzar man— Fred Balzar, who was later elected governor of the state. And that was handled indirectly through Getchell and Wingfield, of course. Mueller guessed right, Scrugham wasn't gonna get elected again as governor, and he became a Republican through there. And a Wingfield agent, I guess you'd call him. He was a lobbyist, and a very good lobbyist. He also became a great friend of Mr. Cord's, when E. L. Cord got appointed senator from Esmeralda County.

Norman Biltz came into the picture and became active in politics. He became very active when Charlie Russell was running for governor. He appears some on the front, but mostly through the other people who represented his thinking, and the money that

was able to raise. I never knew whether they were really interested in Charlie Russell, or in that chemical plant at Henderson, which was government property, comin' up for sale at that time. But they assumed, if they elected Charlie Russell governor, they could practically move into his office, and the chemical plant in southern Nevada became an issue, of which they hoped to have the inside track, because of their electin' Russell. Charlie Russell, for some reason, decided that the chemical plant should be sold at public sale. As a street politician said, "Biltz moved out of the state capitol, governor's office at that time." Which is about what happened.

And he was so disgusted with politics, he practically retired—actively, from politics. He still gave some money, but didn't take much of an active part after that. He found out, maybe like I did, it had two sides to it.

We were talking about Mr. Biltz and his strength in the Republican party.

Yeah, in the Republican party, and his discouragement with politics. Not that he had anything to do with it, but that all has been on my unhappiness with politics, of which I've passed on to my son; I've encouraged him not to take too much serious interest in it, because, quotin' some politician who did, he always had an answer which I thought was right with politics, "It's just like an empty pocket. There's nothin' in it." You just work and work, and when you're done and when they're done, you're out, and that's it. And I think that was Norman Biltz's reaction to it finally.

That Johnny Mueller story we were talkin' about was quite a story, 'cause he was so close to Governor Scrugham, a Democrat. All of a sudden, he's a Republican.

THE "YOUNG TURKS"

At that time, a group of people who were dissatisfied—some of us were young, and some of us weren't young—acquired the name of the "Young Turks." I don't know where the name came from or why it was used. And we decided that we would try to make a change in the state Republican setup. A lot of 'em, includin' myself, had worked for years very hard on the Republican party, but we never elected any primary candidates. The situation was pretty much handled [at] that time in Reno for the Republican side. In fact, I attended meetings in the old Golden Hotel, where they had rooms provided by George Wingfield for the Republicans, and the adjoining rooms were provided by George Wingfield for the Democrats. Just a door—you could walk from one room into the other one—from the Republicans' to the Democrats' party.

That turned out to be quite a campaign. We started at the precinct level in Reno, and had our precinct meetings, and elected our own chairman, and, when we went to the Republican state convention in Tonopah, Nevada, I believe there was 104 or 105 delegate votes from Washoe County. At that convention, we elected our own state chairman, Marvin Humphrey of Reno, and the national committeeman we elected was Bill Wright of Elko County. Wright of Elko County, of course, replaced Noble Getchell.

I had several conversations with George Wingfield, Sr. over this change of campaignin', callin' to his attention to the fact that we had seemed to be quite successful in electin' Democrats to the United States Senate, and we wanted to make a change. Of which, he was not too opposed, or he didn't show that he was opposed. However his son, George, Jr., was quite upset over the thing, and became a little difficult to talk to or do anything with

at all. Getchell, of course, was a partner, or in partners with George Wingfield at the Getchell mine in Humboldt County and Lander County and had been on the board for years.

At the same time, we elected Mrs. Ken Johnson of Carson City national committeewoman. There had been a woman in Tonopah (and I haven't been able to think of her name) [Oline Stewart], who had been holdin' that post for a good many years—hadn't been particularly active, but she was part of the Wingfield group. It's hard to realize today that Tonopah played such an important part in the politics at that time. Washoe County, of course, wasn't a big county, but it was the Republican headquarters, and Tonopah was a carry-over from the mining days. In fact, Tasker Oddie was elected out of Tonopah, back in his term, and a lot of the other people.

The peculiarity of the election of Mrs. Ken Johnson—Ken Johnson was a state senator for Nevada, and quite active in the Republican party, and he lived in Carson, and he wasn't aware of our activities here in Washoe County. And when the first vote came up in Tonopah, was something where you voted as counties, when they had the roll call, out of 105 votes, there was 102 that went in one bloc. And Ken Johnson, who was campaignin' for his wife, was not aware that this bloc existed at all. So, the vote was held just before lunch, and [chuckle] it's a little odd to say, but of course, bein' human beings, we practically all went to the restroom right after the vote, and we pret' near did not get out of the restroom, because Ken was so shook up with his candidate being faced with these conditions, that he practically locked the door to the restroom [laughing], and kept pryin' us to get the information of what was goin' on in Washoe County with 102 votes in one bloc [laughs].

I think the two or three votes against us, and that negative one was Forest Lovelock—I remember he was of course, quite friendly with the Wingfield people—and then George Wingfield, Jr. of course, and Noble Getchell. I think of the 105 votes, they were the three opposing votes.

Before the state meeting in Tonopah, I had been elected to represent Precinct Number Two here in Washoe County at the county convention.

Another peculiar [thing] of the election was contentions of George Wingfield, Jr. Of course, the big hotel at that time in Tonopah was the Mizpah. It was an old hotel; they had a limited number of rooms that had baths. So when the women in our delegation started to call Tonopah for rooms, they were unable to obtain any rooms with baths. Bein' women, they ran that down, and they contributed the thing to George Wingfield, Jr.; he'd tied up all the rooms in the hotel with baths! But they took after him, and they got some rooms with baths before the convention [laughs].

This is the 1952 convention?

Yeah, 1952 was when Marvin Humphrey was elected, and Mrs. Johnson was elected as the national committeewoman when we got out of the menus room [laughs] and—. She replaced [Mrs. Stewart] the woman whom I said I didn't know the woman's name, and then Bill Wright of Elko became national committeeman replacin' Noble Getchell there.

I was thinking there had been some of this Young Turk organization in the late forties.]

Well, it came along in the late forties, but it took a couple of years to put the thing together to get it straightened around. I didn't mind—I told George Wingfield, Sr. that I liked Key Pittman, but I'd been votin' for

Key Pittman my whole life. You would get right up to election, or a couple weeks before election, and Key Pittman, of course, and Pat McCarran both, were Wingfield people at that time, and with the strength they had, the setup they had, they would find things that would make it impossible to elect—; Sam Platt ran against Key Pittman back then one year—in fact, Sam Platt ran against Key Pittman three times, I think, but every time just before election, they would delve out some particular thing against Sam Platt that he couldn't—never beat Key Pittman.

Was it because he was a Jew?

Platt? No. Without mentionin' names, one of the things they used, I think—the last time when Sam Platt ran against Key Pittman, he was practically gonna win the election. And I was involved in the contact with them because of my work and so forth as to how Sam was running—and it was gettin' right down there to election. And somebody in the Republican state party got a letter out to the livestock people in the state that Sam Platt was gonna do such-and-such to the cattle people if he was elected. And to make the letter authentic, they put the letter out and signed Bill Moffat's name to the letter, who was a big cattle operator. And I was told that Bill Moffat had never seen the letter at all before it went out. And Platt lost that election by a very few votes. That was the type of things that had happened back over the years.

I had been told that there was some anti-Semitism within the Republican party, and that some of the things that they did to Platt were just because of his religion.

Well, that might be, but this actual instance I know about—I know it actually happened, and I know that Sam Platt, *in my book*, was

gonna probably win that election, the way it looked at that time, within two weeks, when this letter came out. And of course, it made the papers and everything, what Sam Platt's standing was on the cattle business and so forth and so on. And Sam was defeated.

Lots of people are not aware (but we're gettin' off the subject here) that Key Pittman didn't get elected the first time around into office. Accordin' to the records, he ran three times before he was elected.

In my own political career, I ran for Washoe County commissioner in 1952 against Raymond Capurro. And I was defeated by about 217 votes. Just too many Italians for an Irishman to be elected in Washoe County at that time!

Les Gray was one of the leaders, and Ken Dillon was another leader in the thing. In fact, these Young Turks are the ones that were responsible to a certain extent, for me filing for Washoe County commissioner. And they were really workin' on my campaign, about halfway through it, until they suddenly decided they'd like to elect a man to Congress. While they still supported me, they put their efforts into electin' Cliff Young into Congress, against Walter Baring. And I realized as soon as they split up their efforts, that my possibilities of gettin' elected were pretty well gone, because they decided that they wanted to elect Cliff Young, and they elected Cliff Young to Congress for one time.

There was some very spirited meetings in there, and as I say, Les Gray was one of the main leaders, and Ken Dillon. In the organization, I think it went about two years, and the precinct meetings were well attended [chuckle] and well set up. From the women's side, as I recall it, Mrs. Alleta Gray was one of the leaders, and Marshall Guisti's wife, Mrs. [Eleanor] Halloway. Those were the three women most interested in Young Turk, on the women's side. Mrs. Halloway,

before she was married, was the secretary for the dean of the College of Agriculture.

How did you get people so interested and excited in the Young Turks?

Just because of what I said there, the previous years. While some of these people were fairly young and new at it, some of us were older and had been through the political campaigns several times and were really aware that we weren't electin' anybody, but we were doin' a lot of work. But, comin' up with the wrong people when election was finally over, as far as we were concerned. We had no animosity against people who elected their men like Pat McCarran and Pittman and those people—we realized that they were doin' it for their good and the good of the state— they were both powerful senators. Then naturally, when we went to the state convention, we had just really reached a point of—and as I said, I told Mr. Wingfield that we were gettin' tired of electin' Democrats [chuckle], when we worked so hard in the Republican party.

Ken Dillon, I think, made the county convention speech [chuckles]—he used the theme of, "Little men with wooden guns." That was the title of his speech as I remember it. I guess that referred to the Young Turks. We were little men, we had been doin' a lot of work, but we just had wooden guns when it came to election.

We just did a lot of work, that's all, and had it well set up, and of course, we got the people to the state convention that were gonna vote in the direction we'd been workin' on for two years.

TWO TERMS ON THE RENO CITY COUNCIL

Followin' that election, when that was over and we'd elected our people, I started

then and became manager of what was called the Washoe County Agricultural and Industrial Fair—it was later changed to the Nevada State Fair. In the next event on the politics, which sounds a little unusual: I was a ground superintendent for the Hereford cattle show at the Nevada state fairgrounds, and the phone rang one day, and it was Si Ross—Silas Ross—sayin' that the Republican party, or the group of fifty as you know 'em—had decided they'd like to have me run for city council. [Chuckle] I told Mr. Ross I was very busy runnin' a bull sale, which was actually the truth—I was—and I wasn't interested. But they kept talking and finally convinced me to run. I guess you could say— people say we were drafted. But certainly myself and Claude Hunter and Hugo Quilici, John Chism, were drafted, through this Committee of Fifty, which held closed meetings in the old El Cortez Hotel, and set up the election for the council. And the papers or somebody gave 'em the name of the "Committee of Fifty."

It was not a secret committee. In fact, Earl Wooster acted as chairman of the committee. I never saw fifty people at any meeting, of these businessmen, and outside of Earl bein' a consistent chairman, the crowd of fifty or less varied at practically every meeting. And they had a lot of meetings and a lot of talk, till it finally came down to electioneering and the raisin' the money.

And when they got down there, where they were gonna go, or stop, they just made a motion that they solicit the money, and no gambling halls be contacted for money because of their previous contact in there. And Bill Ligon, who is now chairman of the Security National Bank, I believe, was the first one that offered to give money. We had to do no campaignin', raisin' of money at all—they raised all the money for us that we needed. As we spent it, we would turn our bills in each

week, and they would give us a check for it. A man [Bob Robertson] whose name I forgot was head of the home-builders' association here, served as treasurer for the Committee of Fifty. And when we turned our bills in each time, he would give us a check for our bills. And we had no idea where the money came from, or who had put it up.

I don't know—I can't speak for the others—but when I went into office and anybody appeared before us at the [city council] as a contributor, was unknown to me. And it was certainly a nice way to be elected; you were not obligated or committed to anyone.

And believe it or not, after we were in office, I only had one call from a contributor, from a person who said, "I had given money to your campaign," in one of those certain things, and to me that—maybe he did, maybe he didn't, I don't know. Something came up and he wanted it, and I had no commitment and voted against it.

From my personal view, we had a very good personal relationship as city councilmen. I felt we were all pretty good friends, and I think we still are today. When we had our own opinions, we went our own way. Sometimes we won as an individual, sometimes we lost, but nobody was vicious about it all.

What was it really that made you decide to run?

The thing that brought that Committee of Fifty together was the fact that the city council was doin' nothin' but fightin' amongst themselves and were not too responsible people, because the city hadn't made the effort to select anybody, people would file, and they continually argued.

I think one of the big things that came up was the selection of the Centennial Coliseum site, in which the chairman of the city council,

who became a member of the Centennial site selection, claimed he had two votes. He voted as a chairman, and he voted as a member of the committee. And it was just one thing after another.

Then there was personal fights—actually fights amongst 'em. In fact, I can truthfully say that one city councilman threatened to throw another city councilman out the window at one meeting. That's accordin' to the papers, and I don't doubt but what it happened in there.

And the city was just goin' downhill. One of the city managers selected had hardly gotten in office before the papers found out he was in violation of a hundred or two hundred parking tickets, as a city manager, and he had to be replaced.

Then even after they did agree on Joe Lattimore to become city manager, they still wouldn't let him operate like a city manager; they still had different councilmen that wanted to be city manager or do this and do that.

In fact, one of the peculiarities when I got in office was the city band, which was a pretty small item. You couldn't get the city band to play anywhere, unless you saw Councilman [Charles Cowan].

He carried the band schedule in his pocket as a political gimmick, and if you wanted the city band to perform anywhere, why you had to find Mr. Cowan, and he would make the selection. And to complicate things farther, Glen Smoot was a traffic manager in Reno at that time, but he only was part-time on that; he was a personal chauffeur for Mr. Cowan, especially when the bands were performin'.

It was just that the community had [lost] confidence in the city council. One of the big things at that time was the widening of South Virginia Street, down through the south side of town, and that involved, of course, the federal

bureau of roads, with South Virginia Street also bein' U.S. 395, federal. And we couldn't make any progress on that because the Bureau of Public Roads had just lost confidence in the people they were dealin' with.

We got into office and took the problem over, and the first problem we ran into was the fact that the bureau of roads was suspicious of what we were talkin' about—they just didn't put any confidence in our commitments. In fact, they called a special off-the-record meeting for us in Carson City, with the Bureau of Public Roads, at the restaurant to discuss what we were proposin' and what we were doin' and whether we'd do it. And while they didn't proceed to the extent that the Reno Chamber of Commerce did later, they didn't request us to sign an oath that we would do this. But later on, the Chamber of Commerce was so upset when we proposed to build the Centennial Coliseum, and said we would build the Pioneer Theatre downtown, they presented us with a petition to sign that we would proceed with that. They'd just lost confidence in the people who were on the council—not this one, but the previous council. That was the whole thing; it was quite a hassle, I'll tell you [chuckling].

What did you think of Bud Baker as mayor?

Bud was involved with 'em, of course, at that time, too.

Do you think he was really the key to the loss of confidence?

No. He partially was it, but he didn't have control of that group of people. There were individual people and fought amongst themselves and with everybody else, and spent a lot of time on their own personal projects and their own personal businesses type.

What about George Carr?

Well, George Carr is the one that voted twice or claimed he had two votes in the thing.

Not that we were any heroes, but we were responsible people; that particular council didn't turn up with any real responsible key men, I think, except a man by the name of Dick Dimond, who was the Dodge auto agency in this area at that time.

It was just a group of people, and people who didn't have time to run for office, and other people did, and they ran for it and got elected and didn't represent the community in the right way in the situation.

Oh, without mentionin' names, when the employees' insurance policies that the city buys for the city employees was put out for bid, which it was to the insurance companies and didn't run out until after we came into office, the agent of the insurance company who held that insurance at that time, when he made his offer to the new council, included a fee of three hundred dollars a month to a certain councilman—as, as—I guess you'd call it a bribe or whatever you want to call it—to get the business. And when he was turned down, when we told him he didn't have to bid that way, he was quite shook up. And, well, the newspapers were there at that meeting when that happened. I said to the public newspapers afterwards, "Why didn't you publicize that at all?"

And they explained to me that they couldn't, because they would have to *name* people if they published it, and then they would have to prove it. And probably about all they'd ever get would be a big lawsuit against the papers for chargin' them with this particular policy, which actually happened, but they were in no position to name it.

And we had lots of people who showed up after we were in office, who had zoning

changes to make, who had been holdin' 'em for one to two years because they were afraid of approachin' the old council, thinkin' they might be caught in the trap of what they called an additional "walk around" fee, in other words, money, to get their zoning. So as a result, a lot of work was held back. And that's about as far as—that's exactly what went on—they just didn't have any confidence, and they didn't want to get caught in it.

But I don't know whether you would blame the people who were on the council. They did file for the council, and they got elected, where a lot of responsible people wouldn't file—just didn't want to be bothered with their own city. This is exactly what happened.

This particular council, which I was a part of, served pretty much intact for eight years. I don't know whether I named all of them, did I? Let's see, I named I didn't name Roy Bankofier.

Roy Bankofier was a member of that committee. And of course, Hugo Quilici was mayor. And then there was Ed Spoon, who was a member of that committee. Served only two years, then he left the area and went to Vegas; he was replaced by Ralph Tyler. Then the followin' election after that, Frank Baccigalupi was elected. And Roy Bankofier then was elected mayor.

I served two terms—eight years in there. From my own personal view, I think that (and when you talk about your own personal view, you don't do things by yourself there, but you get things done certain ways) one of the big things that we as a council got done, which probably sounds a little small today, was the purchase of Slide Mountain for the Junior Youth Ski Program.

That area was owned by two brothers who were cattlemen from the Marysville area; they had acquired the ski area through

a mortgage. They were not interested in snow activities, but the city had an arrangement with 'em—on weekends we paid 'em, I believe, five thousand dollars for the season's use, on Saturdays for the Junior Ski Program. They got discouraged because there were so many junior ski programs on Saturday, it was interferin' with their regular adult trade. And apparently a lot of the adult people had complained about the children—or kids, whichever you want to call 'em—bein' in the way on those days. They decided they wanted to get out of that thing, and they offered it to the city of Reno. And we finally arranged to buy it. Washoe County came in with the city of Reno, for a short time, then of course, the Fleischmann Foundation rehabilitated the building and built the ski lifts. We bought the ground and what was there. And it's become a very popular program.

I wonder if one of the clauses we put in there when we purchased it is still there. That was a clause that, because of the low price we paid for it, if the city should ever decide to sell it, that these people or their heirs would have the first right of refusal if they wished to buy it.

And that program, of course, is still in existence today. I don't know, I guess you have to get used to changin' times, but the original intent was that any boy or girl who wanted to ski would be taken care of through the service clubs or some way. But at that time, the fee was very low, and I doubt if that portion of the program is still there today because of the cost of skim', with the charges at that time. We used school buses, which they still use, but they pay a lot more for 'em. Well, that's one of the things I always have pride I had something to do with.

Then in my own area, Taylor Park was one of the projects that was in the works at the time we went in, and through the support of the council we got that completed. Then Paradise Park, which I said at that time would

probably be the last fifty-acre park this area would ever buy (but I turned out wrong when this Rancho San Rafael became a county park).

However, Paradise Park became an issue. We bought the park from Roger Teglia for three hundred thousand dollars— fifteen thousand dollars a year for twenty years, and no interest. But we didn't buy it for a park. When the developers of that Silverado area down there developed those houses in that area, some of the developers had an interest in a gas company outside of the Sierra Pacific Power. And they got into a feud over it, and wanted to serve their houses with their own gas company, and were ruled out. And as far as we know, in retaliation for the fact that they didn't get the gas customers in there, they sold the drainage rights of the Paradise ponds to Roger Teglia who owned the Paradise ponds.

When the subdivision was built, the first thing that happened, we started gettin' floods, because we didn't have any drainage out of that area. The natural drain had been closed off. Then we went to the engineers, and they quoted us five hundred thousand dollars to drain Paradise ponds across to the Truckee River. And every time there was a thunder storm, we had drainage problems, so with this chance of buyin' a park and getting fifty acres and gettin' fifty inches of water, and gettin' a drainage area back, which belonged to the North Truckee Drain, we made the purchase.

And the people remember at that time, it was just a pile of rocks. It was the whole idea of a park; we *hoped* to be a park. But that's how Paradise Park happens to be there. We had to get drainage some way out of that area, for those people settled in that area. And it's turned out to be a good investment. In fact, I think the purchase time is about up on it.

Dunn' the time I was there, durin' the eight years, of course, we built the Centennial

Coliseum, which had been a hassle for some time, as to the location. Different research institutions brought in, and architects and so forth. But by the time we got in office, they had purchased the land out there, so our part in it was the building, lettin' the contract an' selectin' the architects, and so forth.

One of the things that happened there that's interestin' to me today, was energy. When we built the Centennial Coliseum, the Sierra Pacific Power Company was bringing gas from the gas companies into this area for heating purposes. And we were outside the city, out in the county, and they suggested that we put gas in to heat the Centennial Coliseum, instead of oil, which we did. But we also put in oil services at the same time, which turned out later on to be a big advantage, because when the gas prices and gas became short and such an expense, the public buildings were generally the first ones they cut off of the gas.

The building of that Centennial Coliseum was a two-year job, and we met frequently on it. There was a certain amount of dissatisfaction, but we built it. And we got down to the final bid the night before we went to bid, and were a million dollars short, on their estimate. Previous to that time, there had been a motion, somewhere along the line which had set aside a million dollars for construction of a building downtown, which we named Pioneer Theatre. At two o'clock in the mornin', we voted to cancel that arrangement and took the million dollars and signed the contract to build the Centennial Coliseum. Which is also of interest, because the first even in there was the [chuckling] Nevada state basketball tournament, and for the first night it was held, it was too small. [Chuckles]

The state basketball tournament was on and pretty well sold out. And Fallon had a

basketball team, which was not rated up in the winners, but they did win, enough that it brought practically all the people from Churchill County [chuckles] up to see Fallon play that night, and the place was full of people without them. We finally got some of the people to leave, and the other people from Fallon could come in and see their team play. That was opening night.

Because we opened it before the contractor had turned it over to us, you're probably aware—when you let a contract on a building like that, you no longer own it—those contractors and architects own it, until they turn it back to you as completed in the deal. Because of our usin' it ahead of their contract, I think it cost us about thirty thousand dollars for change orders and so forth that they claimed had to be made to use it ahead of time. That was my first experience with an uncompleted contract; I didn't realize that you didn't own a building till they turned it back to you.

And in all the time—when we were in there that eight years, we built the new City Hall, replacin' the old one downtown on the northwest corner of First and Center Street.

We donated the property for the Washoe County Library, where it stands today. I think most people get confused; they think that's the Reno city library, but it isn't; it belongs to Washoe County. The Fleischmann Foundation provided the money for the building of the library in the county, and the city provides the land on which it's built.

We completed a new sewer plant. The property had been purchased previously, but we let the contract for the sewer plant while we were there. And also completed a bridge over the Truckee River—two or three bridges—Keystone, East First Street, and the Wells Avenue overpass, which I shouldn't say much about.

I was hoping that you would say something about that.

Well, I don't mind talking about the Wells Avenue overpass. The same people built the Wells overpass had built scores of bridges for the state highway department and the state contractors, and maybe today are still biddin' and buildin' 'em. We followed all the regular rules and regulations, everything, had the site inspectors, thought we had good contractors, probably did have good contractors, but for some reason, the Wells overpass—. Whether it went disastrous or not, I don't know, simply because it's not smooth to go over.

But I have watched the highway departments in Nevada and California when they build bridges like that, and I've never seen one that hasn't had problems. Practically every time you go from Reno to Sacramento, they're buildin' a bridge, or rebuildin' a bridge. But I spent a lot of time on it, the city engineer who was in charge of it was very capable; he took me down and showed me what the faults were of it, when they had it apart, when they replaced it and remodeled it. Just what went wrong and nobody ever seems to know, maybe, except politics, and what part of politics. I don't think there was any subterfuge, any payoffs, any rackets, just one of those things that happened.

As I said previously, I served as city of Reno's representative on the Washoe County Fair and Recreation Board, which is now the Reno/Sparks Convention Bureau, for eight years.

We spent many hours on that building. And not complaining, received—at the end of eight years, I received one paycheck for thirty-five dollars. And that became possible because when Las Vegas built their convention bureau, they put a clause in the state law that the members of the convention

board shouldn't receive any pay, until the city exceeds a hundred thousand population, which Vegas did. But Reno never qualified for over a hundred thousand till that census when we were servin' the end of eight years. Not only myself, but the rest of 'em, I think, received a paycheck for thirty-five dollars [chuckling], through a state law that was written for another area.

The Centennial Coliseum was a semi-private agency, in which the county sold bonds for the construction, and therefore the county, of course, is responsible for any indebtedness or any bills that the Centennial Coliseum incurs, and pays the bonds in the issue.

Now the Pioneer Theatre downtown is not a county obligation. And as a result, when we sold the bonds for building that, we paid a good deal higher interest to the bond holders. There was never any doubt in our mind or anybody else's that the county would assume responsibility, if it ever became an obligation, but actually it is not an obligation of the taxpayers.

The bond issues itself, were quite a problem. We sold the bonds on that Centennial Coliseum at a reasonable price. Then—to go back in history—there was quite a surge in bond issues at that time, and the bonding companies came up with redeeming-type of bonds, where you would replace the bonds that you had sold by bonds that they would reissue, and you would put the original bonds in trust and sell to another company if you got a better sale. And to deal with three or four or five bonding companies—. And believe it or not, we had to let each one of those bonding companies into the meeting by themselves—not when the other was there. We met all night, one at a time, they explained the advantage.

So we decided to replace the original bonds with a much better bond, a much

better rate of interest. But as it turned out, when you sold these bonds, they have to go on the bond market at the date that's set for them to sell, and you get the rate of interest on your bonds that are prevailing that day. And we were unfortunate to not sell on a good day. So actually, after all our work to replace these bonds and sell the new bonds, we accomplished very little. But doin' that, if you can think back far enough, the bonding companies were, around that time, trying to get a lot of cities and a lot of school boards to replace their bonds because of the different rate of interest. It may have worked in some cases, but I don't know of any where that type of financin' was superb, at all.

In the construction of the Pioneer Theatre, the architects who designed the Centennial Coliseum, before we came on the council, had inserted a clause in there, that if we should ever build another building downtown, they would be the preferred bidders. And of course, as it turned out, we decided to build a dome-type building downtown. And the local architects were not qualified for that type of structure at all, but they insisted on holdin' us to that clause, till the chairman, Bill Gravelle, after several cursory approaches, Just advised 'em that we were gonna take this situation to the newspapers if they didn't relinquish that clause which had been made away ahead of where we were. And they finally wrote us a letter, withdrawing from that, and we went ahead with the bid for the dome-type, which is down there now.

There's no particular problem with the dome-type, except people today probably don't know somethin' we didn't know either, we weren't [chuckle]—especially the artist and the musician—. Those people, they wanted it built bigger with more seats in it. And the minute we brought that up, why, the architects pointed out to us that, the type of building

we were building, for the purpose we were building it, even in places like New York, are not built that big, because it's impossible to get a seating arrangement where the people will be involved in the show that's goin' on, and also, the big fact that everybody doesn't go to the same show on the same night. That is the reason that you have shows runnin' for a year some places, in a place like New York, and six months somewhere else. And after the architects explained it to us, when we explained it to the leaders of the art dealers and so forth, we didn't hear very much more about that particular size, more seats. It just seems funny we wouldn't have thought of that ourselves.

I'm going to start on another point. I talked about that political campaign in 1963, when several of us were drafted for office, and I mentioned the fact we had to raise very little money; it was raised by the Committee of Fifty, and given to a man by the name of Robert Robertson. He was the secretary of the Reno Builders Association, and he in turn distributed the money to the candidates that they had selected.

Of course, we got some people who approached us, and gave us money direct. And even though I'd been around politics for quite a while, I was quite surprised, "who you are before you get elected" and "who you are the next day after you get elected." In most cases, you became a dirty, crooked politician the next day before you even had voted. And I think by that I mean people who had hunted you up and made contributions to your campaign, you would hear 'em talkin' at a social party or somewhere later on, about the dirty, crooked politicians that were in office. In my particular case, I did very little solicitation, and I was quite surprised how my character had changed from [chuckling]

campaigning to elected, when I voted on issues.

And of course, another thing that maybe surprised me, maybe it didn't because I was a little older, was the fact that if people had some particular action they wanted, and it happened to be something you could do for 'em, and do legitimate, you would do it. They very seldom ever thanked you for what you had achieved, but it wouldn't be too long, boy, they would want something else, and sometimes you could get it for em and sometimes you couldn't. It was accordin' to the type of request they made.

I mentioned the gambling casinos before, and how the Committee of Fifty would not—and said they did not—accept any gambling clubs' money for this campaign. And I'll mention again the established fact, that most people say that the "gamblers" ran Reno. Well, from 1963 to '71, I can tell you they didn't run Ward Number Four, because all the big gaming casinos that were in Ward Number Four—and that happened to be my ward—and I always thought they were very considerate; they would approach you with a request they had, before any council meeting, to see what the rest of the council might have felt about it—whether it was possible or there was some problems about it. And I'll be frank with you, we gave the casinos, not anything big, but a lot of little things that they wanted because, without bringing them up at a council table, they would just stir up controversy. And an example would be, where they could park their luggage on the street in front of their hotel while people were waitin' for their airplane or their bus. And if you'da brought it up at a council, you'da probably had newspaper stories and controversy; it was just a courtesy that didn't create that maximum problem.

And there was several other things that they wanted, but they would question you first

and see what the feeling was with the other members. And we had a pretty good council; we could talk about things and decide a lot of it ahead of time, not behind the scenes or the papers, but it just weren't things that'd come up on the table.

One of our biggest problems wasn't the gaming casinos, as people would think. Our bigger problems were the small bars or saloons—one- or two-man operations. They were continually harassin' customers, and changin' ownership, changin' partners, and for a long time, tried to pressure the council into limitin' the number of small bars in town. I didn't blame them too much for this thinking, because it really put them in the driver's seat. Another thing that the previous council had done: bar licenses at that time could be issued to anyone that they wanted to issue it to, with no date of use, or a location on it, and they could put it in their pocket and carry it in their pocket and carry it around with 'em as long as they wanted to. And if they finally found a location and they wanted to open a bar, there was no question, they just had their license. It happened on West Fourth Street very definitely, in a location where the people wanted a bar couldn't get a license, but a councilman walked out of the council office that was defeated, with a bar license in his pocket and opened up a bar. We eliminated that. We put a restriction on it, where there was no bar license issued to any individual who didn't have a location to use it.

But they created a lot of issues, if people will look back, they can remember that the chief of police had had so much trouble with small bars havin' these license, and cancelin' their licenses out, that he was very cautious when he came before this council, of takin' a license away from some of the small bars who had created an offense, until we finally got a little harsh with the chief of police

when he came in and complained about certain bartenders at certain places. And lots of cases, he had issued the license, and he wanted to cancel the license, but he was wary of doin' it because what had happened to him previously. When we started condemning him for his own problem, he started yankin' these licenses away from these type of operators, and the trouble practically ended overnight.

This was Briscoe?

Yes. He couldn't believe his good luck [laughs].

* * * * *

In the political field in the state, I've been involved in the city level, the county level, the State level, and was campaign manager for United States Senator at the federal level. Politics has changed considerable over the years that I've been involved. It used to be a rather seasonal occupation. You ran for office every two years or four years— whatever it was—and in between you were in office, and you carried out your duties. But today, it seems to have become a business, and they're continually campaigning in practically all branches, whether it's city, county, or the state, federal. And of course, the sources of money have changed considerable over those years where you used to get your money direct, personal contact at different levels. Today, it's handled by political "managers," [chuckles] somewhat on a personal level, but mostly on groups and TV and radio, and personal request through letters and cards and that type of operation.

I also think there's been a change in the political field in the type of candidates that are takin' part. There's somewhat a reluctance in maybe successful or prominent business

people gettin' into political offices, because of the background, that once they get elected, how their personality and character changes, with nothing they can do about it. You approach certain prominent people today about filin' for political office, and watch it if they don't just walk off and leave you standing there [chuckling]. They don't even consider—. It's a bad thing that's happened, I believe. It's affected the type of people in office so much.

SUMMARY, WITH SOME NOTES ABOUT MY FAMILY

In my marriage and family life—which I never had a home actually, of any permanence, until I married. Previous to that I had lived with my aunt, Margaret Gibbons in Merced, California. And in the ranch work you lived in the various bunkhouses on the various ranches you were workin’ on. And in college I spent my career in fraternity houses, and after graduation I lived with Herb Foster’s parents, paid board and room, until I was married.

Jeanne Thornton, my wife, was a daughter of William J. and Myrtle Holcomb Stevenson. She was born in 1909 in Verdi, Nevada, and we met at the Stevenson ranch in the Truckee Meadows, which is now under consideration for development for family houses, located about ten miles south of Reno, adjoining the Double Diamond ranch to the south.

We were married May 24, 1928 by Reverend Brewster Adams, minister of the Baptist church. Our first home, we purchased from Robert and Peggy Farrar; they were cousins of Jeanne, my wife. The address is no longer there, but it’s now part of the present Ponderosa Hotel on South Virginia Street.

In the end of that year, 1928, we left Reno and moved to Alliance, Ohio. We were there about six months when the big Depression hit in the East, previous to its movin’ west. And we traveled a lot in the state of Ohio. I was with a public utility company [the Suburban Light and Power Company of Alliance, Ohio] as an agricultural representative.

Because of the Depression, we moved back to Reno in the last days of June of 1929. A short time after that, we purchased the Western Hatchery, where we were for twenty-three years. It was located at 829-837 West Fifth Street. At the present time, it’s the home of Pay’n’Pak. Previous to that, it had been sold to the Safeway Stores.

Our daughter was born on May 21, 1931—Joyce. And a son [William] was born on February 24, 1933. Durin’ our lifetime, Jeanne was president of the Babcock Kindergarten school; Mary S. Doten PTA; Northside Junior High School [chuckles], which you probably remember; and Cub Scout Den Mother; Mother Advisor of the Order of Rainbow for Girls; member of Adah Chapter

Number Four, Order of Eastern Star; and the Federated Church; also a member and past president of Brown-Huffaker Homemakers Club; and past president of the Reno United Parent-Teachers Association (that's before they went national). She's been a member of the Reno Republican Women's Club; member of the American Legion, Darrell Dunkle Post Auxiliary, the child welfare chairman for three years. She's a member and past president of John C. Fremont Chapter, DAR Carson City; honorary past regent of Nevada State Society; a member of the Nevada State Historical Society; member of the Nevada Genealogy Society [chuckling]. Past president of the Nevada State Button Club; chairman of the National Button Show, 1964; past president of Minerva Club SAE fraternity; past president and Mother of the Year, Sigma Nu fraternity Mother's Club (and you can see what happened—I was the SAE, and she was active in that, and when Bill got to college, he became a Sigma Nu); she is a member of the Las Vegas chapter of Daughters of American Colonists, and a state recording secretary in 1979-1994. And then she was State Regent of the DAR—[1972-74]. And just recently, she was one of the organizers and president of the Thomas Holcomb chapter of Colonial Dames of the Seventeenth Century, in Reno. That took about two years to organize it. 1981-93. The chapter was named for her colonial ancestor, Thomas Holcomb, who emigrated to America in 1630, settled in Massachusetts, helped colonize Massachusetts and Connecticut, and drafted the Constitution of Connecticut.

She's had two major operations on her hips. One at Mayo's Clinic, 1949, and the last one in Reno, in 1977. Both these hip operations have been very successful.

In other activities, or connected activities, while I was on the Reno City Council, they appointed me to go to a meeting of

the Municipal Cities in Washington, D.C. Jeanne went with me, and we traveled by train. The train stopped at Laramie, Wyoming, we received a telegram statin' that President Eisenhower had passed away, and the meeting in Washington had been canceled. However, we proceeded to go on to Washington and attended the memorial services in Washington, D.C., watched the processional with the body in state in the Capitol Rotunda. President Eisenhower's wife, Mamie Eisenhower, and family, were stayin' on the same floor in the same hotel, the Washington Hilton Hotel. It was a rather unusual experience, because I don't know of anybody else who was on that particular floor, but every time I went up to the floor after his death, when you came out of the elevator, to your right, the hallways were shut off, and there was just a couple of fellas sittin' there readin' books, and you realize who they were, [Secret Service]. You weren't about to go down that hall.

I attended the funeral procession; it was a lesson in security, I guess you'd say. Every few feet, they had an Army or Navy man, along the parade, and those men were standing, facing in, towards the audience, not towards the parade. A particular man, I remember one colored man, who decided to take his overcoat off, and before he could get his overcoat off, there was a half a dozen police there, to see what he was doin', you know. That's all he wanted to do, was just remove his overcoat.

In that processional, of Eisenhower's funeral, they had, of course, a large number of the old retired Army generals and so forth, and for people who never attended one of these inaugurals, or burials, they travel practically at no speed, one-step-at-a-time, that whole distance from the church. I felt sorry for a lot of the old retired officers there, because it was extremely cold, and that whole

thing was about four or five miles, in that processional.

Oh yes, and then Jeanne said she wants to be sure and tell you, she had bean soup in the Senate dining room [chuckling]; everybody has that, I guess.

In April 15, 1972, Jeanne went to Washington to be installed as the Nevada state representative of DAR, which they had back there. She had a wonderful tour of the city of Washington and was a guest at Senator Cannon's and his wife's, at his home.

My daughter, Margaret Joyce Thornton McCarty now, was born May the twenty-first, '31, and referred to as a "Depression baby." She attended Reno schools, and the Depression was really on at that time, and somewhere in my work, I had acquired a hundred dollars cash, and I went down to Dr. [S. K.] Morrison who was Jeanne's doctor, and paid him a hundred dollars in cash, before the baby was born, which really shook him up. [Chuckle] Doctors at that time weren't gettin' paid like they are today.

She married Vaughn McCarty May 21, 1950, and worked as a bookkeeper at the First National Bank in Reno. She was about twenty years old, and this was a time when the bank was havin' continual trouble gettin' good reliable help that they knew. And one day, Harold Gorman, who was the man in charge, made her the head bookkeeper of the bank—which is hard to realize today—with the statement he was makin' her head bookkeeper because he knew her, she was about the only person in the office who could find the papers when he wanted them. That's what she said; she was practically in tears, because of the older people in there.

After her marriage, her husband was called up in the Nevada Air National Guard, in 1951. He was transferred to various air bases. They finally located him in Victorville,

California, and he stayed there till he was out of the service, and worked for the Cal Interstate Telephone Company, which is now the Continental Telephone Company. He was transferred from there to Barstow, California. They had a pretty rough time because of the housing accommodations and lack of housing, and living in a desert area, and just gettin' started in life. But they made the best of it, and then later on he left the telephone company and came back to Reno.

They had three boys—three sons—and one girl. It was very unfortunate, the second son, Gregory, became ill with cancer when he was nineteen years old, and passed away in about nineteen months. It was a great loss to all of us.

She is the mother of Mike McCarty, Susan McCarty, and the youngest son, Vaughn James McCarty. She's the grandmother of Matthew McCarty and Michael and Mindy Clapp. She has a full-time bookkeeping job now, for brother Bill, at the Reno Recreation Center. Third generation native Nevadan, and proud of her ancestry. Member of John C. Fremont Chapter DAR, and Eastern Star.

My son, William Clarence Thornton, was born February 24, 1934 at home, on West Fifth Street, before we could get to the hospital. Bill's a doer, like his mother, and in schools, he's taken part in all school activities from kindergarten through Mary S. Doten, Northside Junior High, Rena High, and the University of Nevada. He was a Cub Scout and a Boy Scout; member of Reno High Ski Club in 1950, '51, '52; member of Silver State Skiers; American Legion sponsored Western State Junior championship at Sun Valley, Idaho in '52; played end on the Reno High School football team in 1951-52, which shared a co-championship with the Las Vegas high school. He joined the Sigma Nu fraternity at the University of Nevada in October 1952;

skied on the Nevada Wolf Pack ski team '53 and '57; member of Coffin and Keys in 1956; class manager in 1956; Junior Class president; Who's Who in College of 1958; Young Republican; and member of the Block N Society. He graduated at the University on June 1, 1958, in the College of Arts and Science and went to University Of Arizona Law School for one year in 1958-59. He then enlisted in Nevada Air Guard January sixth, '54, under the Nevada Air National Guard aviation cadet program—had three months of flight training at Lackland Air Force Base and was assigned to Graham Air Force Base in Marianna, Florida, then was assigned to five months training at Bryan Air Force Base, Bryan, Texas. He graduated on April 15, 1955, commissioned a second lieutenant, and awarded his wings.

He returned to Reno with civilian status, and then he flew with the 192nd Fighter Bomber Air Squadron in Reno. They flew for that unit durin' his final three years in the University. At that time, they were flyin' the West Coast alert system, and they were flyin' it day and night too— possible invasion in there. And this all took place—practically all his flyin' took place—right when the Air Force was going from propeller planes to jet planes; they were just makin' the switch.

He had the chance of bein' a commercial jet pilot, bein' young and just out of the Air Force of jets, but decided not to do this for a livin'; he'd rather be a lawyer. He liked to fly, but not for a livin'.

He also served two years as alumni president, 1964-65, the University of Nevada; and durin' his term, the association and the Friends of the Library raised seventy-five thousand dollars of matching funds, for the purchase of books —you're probably aware of that. He started the annual alumni support program; served as Homecoming chairman

for 1963-64; joined the Democratic party in 1958 [chuckling]— see what families will do? He was campaign manager for Senator Howard Cannon's campaign in 1964; was president of the Washoe County Young Democrats in '63. He married Barbara Cavanaugh June 14, 1959. He received his law degree at George Washington University in Washington in 1961, passing that, a Bar examination the same year. In his activities in the University, he and his wife Barbara have established the Thornton Peace Prize, which I believe, is still given at the University each year. He's the father of two boys, Brett and Dan Thornton, and a very devoted husband and father.

In the inaugural parade when John F. Kennedy was installed as President of the United States, Bill was chosen as the representative of John F. Kennedy—was in the inaugural float, and represented the incoming President as a student of Yale University, which Bill was on the float. He had a big sweater on with a big "Y" on it, that was then Yale.

Having come to Nevada almost as an orphan in 1914, although my father was here as a livestock superintendent at Constantia, and personally, without any great background education other than graduated from grammar school, I've always felt that the state of Nevada has been very good to me, and especially Reno. I was able to go to Heald's Business College temporarily, served a short time in the Army, was admitted [to] the University of Nevada without any high school background, from which I graduated, and have taken part in a good many changes in Reno-Washoe County area, from the twenties on, especially in the agriculture area, and in handling the welfare in Washoe County and Reno durin' the Depression of the thirties,

previous to the years of it bein' operated by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. I was fortunate enough to appraise approximately five hundred farms in the state for the Federal Land Bank of Berkeley over a period of about four years, have taken part in politics at the city, county, and state level durin' those years. I met and married my wife in 1928, and we're still married [chuck— les]; we have two fine children, which we talked about previously, Joyce Thornton McCarty, and William Clarence Thornton.

In 1978, the College of Agriculture, University of Nevada, Reno, presented me with the Distinguished Alumnus plaque. On April 25, 1982, the Rotary Club of Reno Board of Directors chose me to become a Paul Harris Fellow. The Paul Harris Fellow Medal was presented for devotion to Rotary and its goals, at a district conference held in Reno.

On May 22, 1982, the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada, Reno, approved and conferred upon me the Medal of Distinguished Nevadan, in recognition of significant achievement contributing to the advancement of our state and nation and for exceptional service to the well-being of mankind.

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